Foreword

NACUBO continually undertakes projects that keep the higher education community informed of how chief financial officers and other business office staff contribute to improving their institutions. We also constantly seek new ways to work collaboratively with our sister higher education associations and other partners. The 2010 Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers helps us meet both of these goals.

The survey behind this publication was conducted in consultation with the American Council on Education. It provides the first detailed look at the career paths, job skills and duties, and other aspects of the chief financial officer position at colleges and universities.

NACUBO’s Advocacy and Issue Analysis staff directed this project, with Matt Hamill, senior vice president, providing oversight and Ken Redd, director of research and policy analysis, serving as project manager. Much of the survey design, data analysis, and report drafts were completed by Lucie Lapovksy, a former chief financial officer and college president, with the assistance of Santiago Merea, NACUBO’s former research associate. The project also benefited greatly from the counsel of Jacqueline King, Peter Eckel, and other staff at the American Council on Education.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the dedication of the nearly 1,000 chief business and financial officers—one-quarter of whom are at nonmember institutions—who participated in this census. Thanks to their willingness to share information, this publication offers an unparalleled look at the background, perceptions, responsibilities, and job satisfaction of chief business and financial officers.

John D. Walda
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Association of College and University Business Officers
# Table of Contents

**Foreword** ...................................................................................................................................................... 1

**Executive Summary** ...................................................................................................................................... 6

**Introduction** .................................................................................................................................................. 8

**Survey Methodology** .................................................................................................................................... 9

**Characteristics of Higher Education CFOs** ................................................................................................. 11

  - *Gender* .......................................................................................................................................................... 11
  - *Age* .............................................................................................................................................................. 12
  - *Race/Ethnicity* ............................................................................................................................................ 13
  - *Degrees and Certificates Earned* .................................................................................................................. 13
  - *Marital and Family Status* ............................................................................................................................ 14

**Career History** ............................................................................................................................................... 16

  - *Time in Current Position* ........................................................................................................................... 16
  - *Percentage of Total Careers Spent in Higher Education* ............................................................................. 18
  - *Time Spent Inside and Outside of Higher Education* .................................................................................. 18
  - *CFOs from Inside Higher Education* ........................................................................................................... 20
  - *CFOs from Outside of Higher Education* ....................................................................................................... 23

**The CFO Position: Duties, Job Satisfaction, and Future Career Goals** ......................................................... 24

  - *Portfolios: Areas of Responsibilities and Staff Supervision* ..................................................................... 24
  - *How CFOs Spend Their Time* ...................................................................................................................... 26
  - *Most Important Skills* .................................................................................................................................. 27
  - *Position of Authority on Campus* .................................................................................................................. 28
  - *Reporting Relationship with the Governing Board* ....................................................................................... 29
  - *Perceptions of Importance of Job Responsibilities* ..................................................................................... 29
  - *Working Relationships with Colleagues* ....................................................................................................... 30
List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: CFO Profile Participants, by Various Institutional Characteristics .................................................. 10
Table 2: Distribution of CFOs and CAOs, by Gender ..................................................................................... 11
Figure 1: Distribution of CFOs by Gender, Institution Control, and Institution Type .............................. 12
Table 3: Distribution of CFOs and CAOs by Age Level ................................................................................ 12
Table 4: Race/Ethnicity of CFOs and CAOs .................................................................................................. 13
Figure 2: Degrees and Credentials Earned by CFOs ..................................................................................... 14
Table 5: Marital Status of CFOs by Gender .................................................................................................... 14
Figure 3: Percentage of CFOs, by Gender, with at Least One Child .......................................................... 15
Figure 4: Percentage of CFOs and CAOs, by Gender, Who Altered Their Career Paths for a Spouse, Dependent Child, or Parent ........................................................................................................ 16
Figure 5: CFOs’ Length of Service in Their Current Position ........................................................................ 17
Table 6: Number of Presidents CFOs and CAOs Have Served Under in Their Current Position .......... 17
Figure 6: Percentage of Total Careers Current CFOs Have Spent in Higher Education ....................... 18
Table 7: Career Path That Most Accurately Describes CFOs’ Progressions, by Type of Institution ......... 19
Table 8: Location of Immediate Prior Position of CFOs by Type of Institution ............................................. 19
Table 9: Previous Position of Current CFOs Whose Immediate Past Position Was at a Higher Education Institution .................................................................................................................................. 20
Figure 7: Previous Institutions for Current CFOs Whose Immediate Prior Position Was at a Higher Education Institution ........................................................................................................... 21
Figure 8: Job Mobility of CFOs within Higher Education, by Immediate Past Position and Institution Type .......................................................... 22
Table 10: Institutional Control of CFOs’ Immediate Past Positions Compared with Their Current Institution ............................................................................................................................ 23
Table 11: Immediate Past Positions of CFOs from Outside of Higher Education ....................................... 23
Figure 9: CFOs’ Most Widely Cited Areas of Responsibility ........................................................................ 24
Figure 10: Number of CFO Direct Reports .................................................................................................... 25
Figure 11: Number of CFO Direct Reports, by Institution Type .......................................................... 25
Table 12: Duties on Which CFOs Spend Most of Their Time .................................................................. 26
Figure 12: Amount of Time Spent by CFOs on Various Institution-Related Activities ......................... 27
Figure 13: Most Important Skills for a CFO ............................................................................................. 28
Table 13: CFOs’ and CAOs’ Perceptions of Their Position of Authority within the Campus Hierarchy ...... 28
Table 14: Positions to Which CFOs and CAOs Directly Report ................................................................ 29
Table 15: CFOs’ Reporting Relationships with Their Governing Boards ................................................ 29
Table 16: Perceptions of the Most Important Duties of CFOs ................................................................ 30
Figure 14: CFOs’ Perceptions of Their Working Relationships with Other Campus Officials .............. 31
Table 17: Levels of Job Satisfaction of CFOs and CAOs ......................................................................... 31
Table 18: CFOs’ Most Important Factors for Job Retention .................................................................... 32
Table 19: Most Frequent Sources of Frustration for CFOs ..................................................................... 33
Figure 15: Most Frequently Cited Sources of Frustration for CFOs and CAOs ...................................... 34
Table 20: CFOs’ Next Career Move ......................................................................................................... 34
Figure 16: Next Career Moves of Current CFOs’ Immediate Predecessor ............................................. 35
Executive Summary

Launched in January 2010, the Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers is NACUBO’s first national profile of chief business and financial officers (hereafter referred to as CFOs) at American higher education institutions.

The CFO profile survey, based loosely on the American Council on Education (ACE) 2008 survey of chief academic officers (CAOs), provides information on career paths, current areas of responsibility, and plans for future career advancement, as well as basic demographic and other characteristics. Where possible and appropriate, the data gathered from this profile are used to compare characteristics of CFOs and CAOs.

The survey was sent electronically to approximately 3,000 higher education chief business and financial officers at NACUBO member and nonmember institutions. Valid responses were received from 974 CFOs. Roughly three-quarters of the responses came from NACUBO members, and about half came from colleges and universities with fewer than 4,000 full-time equivalent students. The survey respondents appear to reflect accurately the population of CFOs who were invited to participate.

Data from the census draw a picture of the “typical” higher education chief financial officer. Generally, this person:

- is a man who is about 55 years old
- is married with children
- has been in his current position for about seven years
- has spent most of his career in higher education
- has served under one campus president in his current position
- perceives himself (and is perceived by his president and other institutional colleagues) to be the primary guardian of his institution’s financial resources
- enjoys a great deal of job satisfaction
- most values being appreciated by his campus president and other members of his educational community
- believes he will hold his current job until retirement.
Female CFOs, who represent 32 percent of the survey participants, are less likely to have been married or have children, and are more likely to have said they altered their career paths for family obligations. Female chief financial officers also are more likely to be employed at community colleges.

These gender differences notwithstanding, both male and female CFOs describe their jobs as requiring duties that go far beyond budgeting or accounting. In addition to overseeing institutional financial operations, a majority of CFOs have responsibility for physical plant, auxiliaries, human resources, endowment, internal audit, and public safety. They not only report to their president but also have at least an informal reporting relationship to their board of trustees and manage a business office with at least four staff members. It is no wonder a majority of CFOs mentioned needing communication and staff management skills, in addition to finance and budgeting knowledge, to do their job successfully.

Despite this complexity, and in spite of the fact that the survey was conducted during a tough budgetary environment on most campuses, 90 percent of respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with their current position. While respondents indicated a positive working relationship with their president, some areas of job stress emerged. For example, about 43 percent of survey respondents expressed frustration with “never having enough money” to fully support their institutions, and about one-third said they had their most troubling relationships with their institution’s deans.

CFOs and CAOs are similar demographically, and both cited lack of money as their greatest source of frustration. However, a much higher share of CAOs said they were clearly the second in command on their campuses, and a higher share of academic officers aspired to campus presidencies. In contrast, a plurality of CFOs planned to retire from their current job. At many campuses, the CAO position may be seen as a stepping stone to a college presidency, while the CFO position may be seen as the capstone of a career.

This national profile describes who higher education chief business and financial officers are, how they got to where they are, what they do every day to make their jobs and their institutions better, and what they hope to do in the future. These results should lead to a greater understanding among college and university presidents and other higher education leaders of the unique skills and abilities business office executives bring to their institutions, as well as provide additional information to others who aspire to enter this rewarding profession.
2010 Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers

Introduction

Since its founding in 1962, NACUBO has conducted many surveys that measure the demographic characteristics, professional development needs, and other issues of importance to chief business and financial officers (CFOs). While these surveys have helped inform the membership and the higher education community of many issues surrounding CFOs, the NACUBO Board of Directors, through the 2007-2010 Long-Range Strategic Plan, asked a number of key questions that previous membership surveys had not fully addressed, such as:

- What are the demographic characteristics, education levels, and other personal characteristics of the people currently in CFO positions?
- What career paths do CFOs take to get to their current positions? Do the career paths for women differ from those taken by men?
- How do spousal and family responsibilities affect chief financial officers’ opportunities for career advancement? Do these effects differ by gender?
- What skills do CFOs require to be successful?
- What areas of responsibility do they oversee in addition to financial management?
- Are CFOs satisfied with their current positions?
- Do CFOs aspire to college presidencies and other leadership positions in higher education? Are their career aspirations and other characteristics similar to those of other campus presidential cabinet-level officials?

Providing business officers and higher education leaders with answers to these questions helps fulfill two key goals in NACUBO’s strategic plan: to equip business officers with the knowledge and resources they need to succeed and to prepare business officers for the future.

With these issues in mind, NACUBO, in consultation with the American Council on Education (ACE), launched the 2010 Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers. As NACUBO’s first national profile of chief business/financial officers at American postsecondary institutions, the project was designed to provide information on CFOs’ career paths, current areas of responsibility, levels of job satisfaction, and plans for future career advancement, as well as basic demographic and other characteristics. The CFO profile survey, based loosely on
ACE’s 2008 census of Chief Academic Officers (CAOs), gathered this valuable information and allows for comparisons between CFO and CAO career paths, areas of responsibility, and future career aspirations.

This report first discusses the survey methodology, and then describes the survey results, with an emphasis on CFOs’ personal characteristics and educational attainment levels; career paths they took to get to their current positions; areas of responsibility and skill sets needed to perform their jobs; levels of job satisfaction; and future career goals. Where appropriate, comparisons are made between the CFOs and ACE’s 2008 data on chief academic officers.

**Survey Methodology**

The survey population includes chief financial officers at four-year and two-year public and private nonprofit colleges and universities (both NACUBO members and nonmembers), as well as those at regionally or nationally accredited private for-profit (proprietary) two- and four-year institutions, governing boards, and state systems of higher education. Contact information for the NACUBO members came from membership databases, while addresses for nonmembers were culled from the 2010 *Higher Education Directory*. In total, NACUBO invited approximately 3,000 CFOs to participate. NACUBO members account for approximately 2,200 of the CFOs of the survey population.

The survey instrument (see the appendix) was initially sent electronically to all the selected business office leaders in January 2010. During the six-week survey period, three follow-up e-mail messages were sent to remind people to respond. The survey period closed in mid-February. Valid responses were received from 974 CFOs, approximately 32 percent of the survey population.

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by institutional control, NACUBO membership status, and constituent group. About 48 percent of the total participants were CFOs at private nonprofit higher education institutions, while 45 percent came from those at public two- and

---


2 The survey results include chief financial officers and chief business officers. However, for clarity and brevity, hereafter much of the text and many of the data tables and figures will refer to the survey population and results for “CFOs.”

3 Due to a number of invalid and outdated e-mail addresses in the *Higher Education Directory*, the exact number of CFOs who received the survey could not be determined. As a result, an precise survey response rate could not be calculated.
four-year colleges and universities; 2 percent of respondents were chief business/financial officers at private for-profit (proprietary) schools. The “other” respondents include CFOs at state system offices, governing boards, and consortia offices.

NACUBO members accounted for three-quarters of the respondents. In addition, approximately 47 percent of the respondents were at small institutions (primarily four-year private colleges and universities with full-time equivalent student enrollments below 4,000). Because small institutions represent roughly the same share of the total NACUBO institutional membership, it is likely that the distribution of respondents generally reflects the distribution of the full population of CFOs who received the survey.

Table 1: CFO Profile Participants, by Various Institutional Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Control</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Nonprofit</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private For-profit</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACUBO Membership Status(^4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Type(^5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Colleges</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive/Doctoral Universities</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Universities</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Institutions</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) NACUBO institutional membership status as of January 2010.

\(^5\) Community colleges are public two-year institutions. Comprehensive/doctoral universities are master’s and doctoral-granting institutions with enrollments of 4,000 or more. Research universities are those that have been classified as Research-Extensive institutions by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Small institutions are primarily baccalaureate-granting colleges and universities with full-time equivalent enrollments of fewer than 4,000 students.
Characteristics of Higher Education CFOs

This section examines the demographic and other characteristics of higher education chief financial officers, with a focus on the differences between the men and women in the profession. Wherever appropriate, the results for CFOs and CAOs are compared, based on ACE’s data analysis.

Gender

Men account for roughly two-thirds of those who hold CFO positions at U.S. higher education institutions, as Table 2 shows. Men also accounted for a higher share of those in chief academic officer positions in 2008, as revealed by data from ACE’s census.

Table 2: Distribution of CFOs and CAOs, by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While women make up less than one third of CFOs in higher education, their representation at colleges and universities is actually much higher than in other industries. In 2009, only 12 of the CFOs at Fortune 500 companies were women.  

Figure 1 reveals little difference in the distribution of CFOs by gender between public and private institutions. Thirty percent of the CFOs at private institutions are women, compared with 33 percent at public institutions. When the data are disaggregated by institution type, however, significant differences appear. At comprehensive universities, for instance, just 21 percent of the chief financial officers are women, compared with 42 percent at community colleges.

---

Age

It generally takes a number of years of training and professional expertise to achieve a chief financial officer position at a college or university. Because of this need for training and experience, very few of these professionals are below the age of 40, and more than 85 percent of the respondents are 45 years old or older (see Table 3).

In general, CFOs are slightly younger than CAOs. The average age of a CAO is 57 years, while the average age of a CFO is 55. About 65 percent of CAOs are 55 years old or older, compared with 53 percent of CFOs. Conversely, about one-third of CAOs are younger than 55, compared with almost half of the CFOs.

Table 3: Distribution of CFOs and CAOs by Age Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Level</th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 35</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 65</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and older</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2010 Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers | 12
**Race/Ethnicity**

Racial/ethnic minorities account for a very small share of current CFOs, as Table 4 illustrates. In total, only 10 percent of the NACUBO survey participants identified themselves as persons of color. Just 3 percent of the respondents were Asian/Pacific Islanders and 5 percent were African Americans. Similarly, CAOs in 2008 were also overwhelmingly white, non-Hispanic. ACE’s survey results show that only about 15 percent of academic officers identified themselves as racial/ethnic minorities.

Table 4: Race/Ethnicity of CFOs and CAOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes respondents who identified themselves as belonging to more than one racial/ethnic category.

--Less than 1 percent.

**Degrees and Credentials Earned**

Nearly all chief financial officers have at least a bachelor’s degree, and 76 percent have an advanced degree. The most common advanced degree is the master’s of business administration (MBA), held by 48 percent of the CFOs (see Figure 2). Because the MBA degree provides recipients with coursework and training in various areas of accounting, marketing, human resources, operations, management, and other aspects of business-related operations, it is widely recognized as a valuable credential for entry into management-level professions related to finance. In addition, 28 percent of respondents hold some other master’s degree and 11 percent have a doctorate. By comparison, 82 percent of chief academic officers have a doctoral degree, according to ACE’s census.

Slightly more than one third (38 percent) of the CFO profile participants hold a certified public accountant (CPA) credential. Note that these responses are not mutually exclusive: Some respondents may have received both an MBA and a CPA or may have earned multiple graduate degrees.
Marital and Family Status

Overall, 83 percent of all CFOs are married; 7 percent are divorced or separated, and 2 percent have domestic partners (see Table 5). By gender, a significantly higher share of men are married, while a significantly higher share of women are divorced. Female CFOs are also more likely to have never been married.

Table 5: Marital Status of CFOs by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic partner</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Responses are not mutually exclusive, as some CFOs have multiple graduate degrees and credentials.*
The majority of CFOs (86 percent) have at least one child. Just as with marital status, however, a higher share of men than women are parents (see Figure 3).

![Figure 3: Percentage of CFOs, by Gender, with at Least One Child](data:image/png;base64,iVBORw0KGgoAAAANSUhEUgAAAIoAAAD2CAIAAADJg1RDAAAAGXRFWHRTb2Z0d2FyZQBBZG9iZSBJbWFnZVJlYWR5ccllPAAAAaRSTlDAAAAAAAAAAADAAAAE6A7H/0AAAAAElFTkSuQmCC)

Although female CFOs are less likely than their male counterparts to have been married or have children, family responsibilities appear to have had a much more significant effect on the women’s careers. As shown in Figure 4, nearly one quarter of the female respondents report altering their career path to support a spouse, care for a dependent child, or care for an ill or elderly parent. Only 8 percent of the men have done so. The changes in career path include working a part-time or reduced schedule, leaving a job, or postponing a job search for family reasons.
The results for female chief academic officers are similar to those for CFOs. According to the ACE survey, just under one third of the female CAOs said they altered their career progression for a spouse or other family obligation, compared with 10 percent of their male colleagues.

**Career History**

The credentials and skill sets that CFOs possess allow them the flexibility of working both in higher education as well as in other industries. The 2010 NACUBO profile survey asked a series of questions that examine the career paths of CFOs, with an emphasis on time spent in current position, percentage of total career spent in higher education, changing jobs into and out of higher education institutions, and promotions from lower-level finance-related positions to the CFO position at colleges and universities.

**Time in Current Position**

While CFOs are at an average age generally considered to be mid- to late career, they have spent a somewhat surprisingly small portion of their careers at their current higher education institution. On average, survey participants have been in their current position for about 7.4 years. As Figure 5 demonstrates, half the CFOs have been in their position for four years or fewer, while nearly one quarter have been in their position for 10 years or more. These data suggest a great deal of movement among current CFOs.
Given the relatively short amount of time business officers have worked at their current institution, it is not surprising that the majority (55 percent) have served under only one president/chief executive officer in their current position. As shown in Table 6, about one quarter (27 percent) have worked for two chief executives and 18 percent have worked for three or more.

Table 6: Number of Presidents CFOs and CAOs Have Served Under in Their Current Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Presidents/CEOs</th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or More</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CAOs are even more likely to have served under just one chief executive, with seven out of 10 having done so. These data suggest that CAOs are more likely to leave their institution soon after a change in the campus presidency, while CFOs may be somewhat more likely to remain after a change in administration.
**Percentage of Total Career Spent In Higher Education**

While the time spent as a chief finance officer at one institution is comparatively brief, many CFOs appear to have spent much of their careers employed at higher education institutions. In total, more than 60 percent of survey participants have spent at least half of their career in higher education (see Figure 6). About 48 percent have spent between 50 percent and 99 percent of their total working lives at postsecondary institutions; 15 percent have spent their whole career in higher education.

Only 17 percent of CFOs have worked at colleges and universities for less than 25 percent of their total careers. This finding suggests a genuine dedication to service to higher education among the survey respondents.

![Figure 6: Percentage of Total Careers Current CFOs Have Spent in Higher Education](image)

**Time Spent Inside and Outside of Higher Education**

Although current CFOs have spent much of their careers in higher education, the data suggest at least some CFOs move between postsecondary institutions and jobs in other sectors. For example, about 44 percent of the CFOs came to their current position from outside of higher education. Roughly one-fifth came to their current position by moving in and out of higher education, and slightly more than one third have spent their entire careers in higher education (see Table 7).
Table 7: Career Path That Most Accurately Describes CFOs’ Progressions, by Type of Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By moving in and out of higher education</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From outside of higher education</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole career spent in higher education</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant differences, however, emerge among CFOs’ career progressions by type of institution in which they are currently employed. About 51 percent of CFOs at comprehensive institutions have spent their whole careers in higher education, versus 35 percent of those at community colleges and 31 percent at small institutions. In contrast, about half of the survey participants from small institutions came to their current position from outside of higher education, compared with only 29 percent at comprehensive institutions and 36 percent at research universities.

Comprehensive and research institutions seem to have a greater share of CFOs who came directly from higher education. As Table 8 indicates, more than 80 percent of the chief financial officers at comprehensive and research institutions came to their current positions from inside higher education; 38 percent and 29 percent of CFOs at small institutions and community colleges, respectively, were employed outside of higher education immediately before assuming their current position.

Table 8: Location of Immediate Prior Position of CFOs, by Type of Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Prior Position</th>
<th>Comm. College</th>
<th>Comp Colleagues</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insider Higher Education</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Higher Education</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Based on type of institution at which CFOs are currently employed.
CFOs from Inside Higher Education

Many chief financial/business officers may have come to their current positions from inside higher education because of good prospects for promotions from lower-level jobs. In other words, they climbed the career ladder within higher education. Among the survey respondents who came to their current positions from inside higher education, controller was the most likely previous position, followed by assistant or associate vice president of finance, director of budget, and system executive (see Table 9). Only 9 percent held the comparable position of chief financial officer at a different institution, while 6 percent of the CFOs had previously held a faculty position.

Table 9: Previous Position of Current CFOs whose Immediate Past Position was at a Higher Education Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Past Positions</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant or associate VP for finance</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of budget or finance</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System executive</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief financial/business officer</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal auditor</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant to the president/chief of staff</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other position</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among those who came to their current position from inside higher education, survey respondents are almost evenly divided between those who changed positions at their current institution versus those who came from a different institution. As Figure 7 illustrates, women were much more likely than men to move into the chief financial officer position if they were already working at the same institution (57 percent versus 43 percent), while men were much more likely than women to come to the CFO position from another college or university (56 percent versus 44 percent.)
A substantial variation exists in the previous positions held by current CFOs depending on whether they were promoted at their own institution into the CFO position or recruited from another institution. Among those promoted from within, the most common previous positions are assistant/associate vice president of finance or controller; these two positions account for more than 50 percent of all survey respondents who were internally selected (see Figure 8). Twenty-three percent of the internal selections come from “other” positions.

Among CFOs recruited from other colleges or universities, 61 percent held a similar position at their previous institution. Only 12 percent were previously an assistant or associate vice president of finance, and 7 percent were controllers. Another previous position common among current CFOs is director of budget, from which 11 percent of CFOs are promoted at their institution and 7 percent come from other institutions.
Figure 8: Job Mobility of CFOs within Higher Education, by Immediate Past Position and Institution Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Same Institution</th>
<th>Different Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asst./Assoc. VP of Finance</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Budget</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes only respondents whose immediate past position was at a higher education institution.

Table 10 shows that among the survey participants who came to their current job from a different institution, about one in five (21 percent) switched between a public and private institution; this indicates some mobility between types of institutional control. Three quarters (74 percent) stayed in the same type of institution. Of the 5 percent who moved from a system office to a specific higher education institution, most stayed in the public arena.
Table 10: Institutional Control of CFOs’ Immediate Past Positions Compared with Their Current Institution*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private to Private*</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public to Public</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public to Private*</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private to Public</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State System to Public</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State System to Private*</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes only respondents whose immediate past position was at a higher education institution.

+CFOs from Outside of Higher Education

About a third of the survey participants held a position outside postsecondary education immediately before becoming a higher education CFO. Table 11 shows that the plurality of these respondents came from business or industry (other than accounting firms), followed by government, nonprofit organizations, and accounting firms.

Table 11: Immediate Past Positions of CFOs from Outside of Higher Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Past Position</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business/industry executive</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. agency personnel or elected official</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit executive</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting firm</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting firm</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal, medical, or other professional</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other position</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The CFO Position: Duties, Job Satisfaction, and Future Career Goals

The NACUBO survey asked participants a series of questions designed to ascertain their various job functions. These questions related to areas of responsibility (including staff supervision duties) and the most important skills needed to perform their jobs successfully, as well as perceptions of relationships with campus presidents and other staff, overall job satisfaction, sources of frustration, and future career goals.

Portfolios: Areas of Responsibilities and Staff Supervision

As Figure 9 describes, CFO portfolios (areas of responsibility) are quite broad. As might be expected, the most common duties for business office leaders involve overseeing their institutions’ financial operations: budget, controller, purchasing, and bursar.

Two-thirds or more of CFOs, however, also have responsibility for the campus physical plant, auxiliaries, and human resources. More than half oversee endowment, internal audit, and public safety. These data confirm the complexity and varied nature of the CFO position, which often extends far beyond accounting and budget operations.

In addition to this broad range of responsibilities, CFOs also manage staff. Figure 10 shows the distribution of the number of staff members who report directly to the CFO. About 32 percent of CFOs have six or seven direct reports. More than 80 percent said they supervise between four and 10 direct reports.
Overall, about 9 percent of the survey respondents have 10 or more direct reports, while 8 percent have fewer than four.

As might be expected, the size of staff varies greatly by institutional type, as Figure 11 shows. Sixty percent of the CFOs at research institutions have eight or more direct reports, compared with 41 percent at comprehensive institutions, 30 percent at community colleges (CC), and 25 percent at small institutions.
How CFOs Spend their Time

Respondents were asked to select the three duties on which they spend the most time. Table 12 lists the responsibilities mentioned most frequently. Although almost all respondents (97 percent) cited budgeting and financial management as the top time-consuming area, more than 60 percent also listed staff supervision and facilities management, and more than one-third (36 percent) selected strategic planning. Only 20 percent mentioned accountability/accreditation, entrepreneurial activities, and enrollment management.

Table 12: Duties on Which CFOs Spend Most of Their Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duties</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting/financial management</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervising and managing personnel</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities, space allocation, and capital projects</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability, accreditation, assessment</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial activities</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment management</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the above areas of responsibility, more than 80 percent of respondents spend a “moderate” or “significant” amount of their time with their governing boards (see Figure 12). About 68 percent devote at least a moderate amount of time working with other colleges and universities on joint or consortia activities, and more than half (53 percent) spend at least a moderate amount of time on government relations-related activities. Comparatively fewer CFOs devote large amounts of time to community outreach, economic development, fund raising, or alumni relations.
Figure 12: Amount of Time Spent by CFOs on Various Institution-Related Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the governing board</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With other colleges/consortia</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government relations</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund raising</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp. rel./econ. dev.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community rel./outreach</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni relations</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most Important Skills

Because of their various areas of responsibility, staff supervision requirements, and time spent on numerous activities both inside and outside the business office, chief financial officers require a wide range of skills. When asked to cite the three most important skills for their jobs, nearly all CFOs (94 percent) selected finance and budgeting skills (see Figure 13). In addition, 60 percent believe communications skills are important, followed by human resources/staff management (43 percent). About 30 percent of survey respondents cited accounting as an important skill.
Position of Authority on Campus

Table 13 illustrates how CFOs perceive their authority within their institution’s administrative hierarchy. While one in five survey participants (20 percent) report being the “clear number two” (second in command, behind the president/CEO) at their institution, 44 percent believe someone else is the designated second in charge. Slightly more than one-third of the respondents are at colleges and universities where they perceive themselves as one of several vice presidents of equal standing within the line of authority.

Table 13: CFOs’ and CAOs’ Perceptions of Their Position of Authority within the Campus Hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position of Authority</th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear Second in Command</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of Many VPs of Equal Status</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone Else Is Second in Command</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One substantial difference between business officers and academic officers arises in their perception of who is “number two” on their campus. According to ACE’s 2008 chief academic officer census, about two-thirds of CAOs believe they are the clear second in command, and just 11 percent believe someone else on campus is directly behind the president in authority.

2010 Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers | 28
While many business officers do not believe they are the clear second in charge at their institutions, they generally report directly to their presidents, as Table 14 illustrates. Only 7 percent of CFOs do not report directly to the president, with 5 percent reporting to the executive vice president and 2 percent reporting to another position. Similarly, about 95 percent of CAOs report directly to the chief executive on their campus.

Table 14: Positions to Which CFOs and CAOs Directly Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President/CEO</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive/Senior Vice President</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Reporting Relationship with the Governing Board*

In addition to reporting to the campus president, many business officers have a reporting relationship with their institution’s governing board. As Table 15 shows, almost two-thirds of CFOs have some type of reporting relationship to their board. No overall difference exists between male and female business office leaders in this regard, although women are more likely than men to have a formal reporting relationship to the board.

Table 15: CFOs’ Reporting Relationships with Their Governing Boards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Reporting Relationship</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Perceptions of Importance of Job Responsibilities*

Given their duties, position of authority on campus, and reporting relationships to governing boards, CFOs usually have extensive contact with campus presidents and other members of their institutional communities. Survey participants were asked to identify their two most important job responsibilities and indicate how their president and other cabinet-level officers might respond to the same question.

Most CFOs (84 percent) believe the most important part of their job is managing the institution’s resources; roughly the same percentage believes their president and other cabinet officers would agree with this assessment (see Table 16). Thereafter, significant differences
emerge between the CFOs’ views of the importance of their other tasks and their perceptions of their colleagues’ views.

For instance, almost a third of the survey participants (31 percent) believe that leading change and fostering innovation represent vital parts of their job, but they think only 25 percent of presidents and 17 percent of other cabinet officers would have the same opinion. On the other hand, about one-quarter of the CFOs (24 percent) cite supporting the president as an important aspect of their job, but 32 percent believe their presidents would see this task as among the most important. Engaging the community in financial decisions and communicating was identified by 20 percent of the survey participants as a key part of their job, but 29 percent thought the other cabinet officers would rate this as an important role for the CFO.

Table 16: Perceptions of the Most Important Duties of CFOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duties</th>
<th>CFO</th>
<th>President*</th>
<th>Cabinet*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing the institution’s resources</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading change and fostering innovation</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the president and managing up</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging the community in financial decisions</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making important decisions even when unpopular</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a clean audit</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing the institution’s capital projects</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing the institution’s endowment</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The CFOs reported their perceptions as to how the president and cabinet would rate the importance of these duties for chief financial officers.

Working Relationships with Colleagues

The majority of CFOs say they have successful working relationships with their bosses (see Figure 14). About 62 percent of respondents said they have their “best” relationship with their chief executives, compared with 19 percent who said their relationship with the president is their “most challenging.”

On the other hand, almost one-third of respondents (31 percent) report having the best relationship with other vice presidents (besides the chief advancement officer). Still, the same percentage believes that other vice presidents represent their most challenging relationships.
Figure 14: CFOs’ Perceptions of Their Working Relationships with Other Campus Officials

According to the survey, CFOs have their most challenging relationship with college deans. Only 3 percent of survey participants said their best working relationships are with deans, compared with 34 percent who indicated that the deans presented the greatest challenge. Because deans often must advocate for additional resources for programs they oversee, this advocacy role may account for some of the perception of challenging relationships.

Job Satisfaction

In 2008 and 2009, business officers had to deal with a severe recession, endowment losses, and a credit crisis. At many institutions, these events led to hiring freezes, cuts in administrative and other expenses, and other substantial challenges. Despite these tough economic times, the overwhelming majority (90 percent) of 2010 NACUBO profile participants report being satisfied with their current position, with 41 percent of all respondents saying they were very satisfied (see Table 17).

Table 17: Levels of Job Satisfaction of CFOs and CAOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CFOs</th>
<th>CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfied/Very Unsatisfied</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While CFOs generally appear satisfied with their current positions, their levels of job satisfaction are not as high as those expressed by chief academic officers in 2008. ACE’s survey reported that about 63 percent of CAOs were very satisfied with their jobs, and 96 percent were at least somewhat satisfied. The ACE survey, however, was conducted before the economic crisis was in full swing; this difference in timing may partially explain the divergent levels of job satisfaction.

NACUBO profile respondents were also asked which factor would keep them most fulfilled at their current positions. Somewhat surprisingly, relatively few—about one-quarter—expressed a need for increased pay or other compensation (see Table 18). On the other hand, half said being appreciated by their campus leaders or others within their communities was the most important retention factor. Other job retention factors mentioned by 14 percent of CFOs included: the ability to make a difference, respect, support from the president, teamwork, adequate resources, and an institutional growth strategy.

Table 18: CFOs’ Most Important Factors for Job Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Compensation</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Responsibility</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources of Frustration

While expressing general satisfaction with their current position, profile participants identified several areas of frustration. The survey asked CFOs to list the two issues causing them the most frustration. Perhaps reflecting the difficult economy and the need to make budget reductions during the survey time span, a plurality of CFOs (roughly 43 percent) selected “Never Having Enough Money” (see Table 19). Other sources of frustration included the belief by others that the CFO is infinitely accessible to other campus staff (selected by 24 percent of respondents); cultivating leadership in others; unresponsive campus governance; and campus infighting (20 percent each).
Table 19: Most Frequent Sources of Frustration for CFOs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Frustration</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never enough money</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief by others that you are infinitely accessible</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The difficulty of cultivating leadership in others</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unresponsive campus governance structures</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus infighting</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult faculty</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear expectations and metrics of success</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meddlesome board members</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with other administrators</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Respondents were allowed to select up to two responses.

Just 17 percent expressed frequent frustration in working with campus faculty members. Equal percentages (10 percent) experienced frustration with board members and in relationships with other campus administrators.

Figure 15 compares the most frequently cited sources of frustration for CFOs with those expressed by CAOs. In general, the CAOs identified the same challenges as chief financial officers. Just under half the academic officers said that lack of money caused them the most difficulty, followed by the belief that other campus officials think they are always accessible. A higher percentage of academic officers, however, experienced frustration with cultivating campus leadership, while a higher share of CFOs indicated that campus infighting was their most difficult issue. Equal percentages of CAOs and CFOs mentioned difficult faculty members as their most frequent source of frustration.
Next Career Move for CFOs

When asked to speculate on their next career move, a plurality (40 percent) of survey participants said they planned to retire from their current position. As shown in Table 20, 17 percent plan to seek a CFO position at a different college or university, and only 8 percent aspire to a campus presidency. About one quarter of the respondents remain undecided about their next career move.

Table 20: CFOs’ Next Career Move

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next Career Move</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retire</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know/Undecided</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek another CFO position at a different college</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek a presidency</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek work outside of higher education</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek a faculty position</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek a different position at my current institution</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result is not a surprise given the age levels of the profile participants. The results also mirror the next career moves of the CFOs’ immediate predecessors. As Figure 16 illustrates, 41 percent of the survey participants succeeded someone who retired from the position; 24 percent of immediate predecessors moved to a CFO position at another institution, and 18 percent took a position outside of higher education. Only 4 percent moved to a presidency.
In this area, the results of the CFO survey differ significantly from the data collected for CAOs. ACE’s data show that nearly 30 percent of CAOs plan to seek a presidency. This result may reflect the fact that many colleges and universities view the CAO position as a training ground for a college presidency. In contrast, CFOs may believe their job represents the capstone of their career.

The results may also reflect the greater percentage of CAOs who believe they are second only to the president in their campus hierarchy or the fact that most CAOs have a doctoral degree compared to only 11 percent of CFOs.
Summary: Beyond a General Portrait of Higher Education CFOs

The results of the CFO profile of higher education CFOs go beyond providing a general portrayal of the demographic and other characteristics of current chief financial officers in higher education. This survey also provides a detailed description of a job that is very complex and requires a wide variety of skills.

While the “typical” chief financial officer in higher education is a highly educated 55-year-old male who have been in his current position for about seven years, a number of differences emerge between men and women in this position. A relatively high share of Female CFOs are employed at community colleges. Women are also less likely than their male colleagues to be (or have been) married or have children, and are more likely to have altered their career paths (such as changing jobs, working part-time, or taking extended leave) to care for a spouse or family member. Women also are more likely to have to come to their current positions as a lateral move (as a CFO from another college or university), while men are more likely to have been promoted to CFO from a lower-level job such as controller or budget director.

Despite these differences, both male and female CFOs say their jobs require numerous skills beyond budgeting or accounting expertise. In addition to overseeing institutional financial operations, about two-thirds of CFOs have physical plant and auxiliaries in their portfolios, and more than half oversee human resources, endowment, internal audit, and public safety. Most also have at least an informal reporting relationship with their governing board, and two-thirds spend at least a moderate amount of time with other colleges and universities on joint or consortia activities. Approximately half of the survey respondents spend at least a moderate amount of time on government relations issues.

In addition to these duties, CFOs manage a business office staff of at least four. Not surprisingly, a majority of business office leaders said they need communication and staff management skills, in addition to finance and budgeting knowledge, to do their job successfully.

The CFO position may have become even more complicated given the difficult economic times faced by the U.S. during the survey period, which likely caused a large number of the survey respondents to implement budget cuts and other austerity measures at their colleges and universities. Despite these tough times, 90 percent of the CFOs reported being at least satisfied with their current positions. A solid majority of respondents indicated they had a positive working relationship with their institutional presidents, and only 10 percent expressed difficulties dealing with their governing boards.

But some areas of job stress are evident. More than four out of 10 participants expressed concern with the lack of adequate financial resources at their institutions, and about one-third
said their most challenging working relationships were with campus deans. This finding may further underscore the lack of financial resources available to support all the deans’ programs.

Where appropriate, the results of the CFO profile were compared with ACE’s 2008 survey of chief academic officers. Both CFOs and CAOs had similar demographic characteristics, large majorities of both reported directly to their college presidents, and more than 90 percent of both groups expressed positive job satisfaction. Pluralities of both CAOs and CFOs identified lack of money as their greatest source of frustration. A much higher share of CAOs, however, said they were clearly the “second in command” on their campuses, and a higher share of academic officers aspired to campus presidencies. At many campuses, the CAO position may be seen as the “training ground” to a presidency, while the CFO position may be seen as the capstone of a higher education financial management career.

The results of this first-ever NACUBO national profile of chief business and financial officers bring additional understanding of the CFO position and the people who hold it. The data describe who chief business/financial officials are, how they got to where they are, what they do every day to improve their institutions, and their plans for the future. These results should lead to a greater understanding among college and university presidents and other officials of the unique skills and abilities chief business and financial officers and their staffs bring to their institutions, and provide additional information to those who may aspire to hold this challenging but rewarding position.
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Business Officer Survey 2010

This brief survey will help us gather valuable information about the career paths and professional development needs of chief business officers. Please submit your survey by Friday, February 5, 2010. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your institution does NOT need to be a member of NACUBO to participate in this study. All CFOs/CBOs who participate in this survey will receive a complimentary copy of the summary report. In addition, the survey results will be shared at the 2010 NACUBO Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA.

Please complete as much of this survey as you possibly can. All answers will remain strictly confidential. NACUBO will only report these data in the aggregate—NO individual institutional data will be publically. However, if you believe there are any questions you find objectionable or cannot answer, please feel free to skip them and return the survey with any other responses. Please try to complete this survey and submit it to us by Friday, February 5, 2010.

Save, Review & Print Your Responses

To begin the survey, please click the "Next" button on the bottom of this page. If you wish to "Save" the survey and return to it at another time, you can set a Favorite or Bookmark for the survey, and then click the "Save" button at the bottom of the screen. If cookies are enabled, when you return to the survey you will be taken to the place you left off. You may review and print your answers before clicking the "Finish" button to submit your response. On the last screen of the survey, select the "Review" button to review and print your responses.

Submitting Your Survey

When your survey is complete, be sure to click "Finish" at the bottom of the page to submit your responses. Please note that once you have submitted your data you will no longer be able to log in to the survey.

If you accidentally clicked on "Finish" send us an email with your authentication code. This code should appear on your screen when you are trying to re-open the survey.

Please submit your survey by Friday, February 5, 2010.
Section 1 - Your Current CFO/CBO Position

1) What year were you appointed to your current position?

2) To whom do you report directly?
   - President/Chancellor/CEO
   - Executive/Senior Vice President
   - Other Vice President
   - Other

3) Do you have any reporting relationship to your institution’s Board of Trustees/Board of Directors?
   - Yes, formal (e.g., I have a title related to Board relationship, such as Treasurer of the Board)
   - Yes, informal
   - No

4) With whom is this relationship? (Check all that apply.)
   - Chair of the Finance Committee
   - Chair of the Board
   - Other Board Member
5) In your current position, under how many presidents have you served?
   - One
   - Two
   - Three or more

6) Which of the following best describes your place within the campus administration?
   - Number two for all practical purposes (behind the president/chancellor)
   - Someone else (e.g., Chief Academic Officer) is the clear number two
   - One of many/a few VPs of fairly equal status

Section 2 - Your Current Job Duties and Skills

7) Please indicate what is included in your current portfolio of responsibilities. Check all that apply.

   - [ ] Controller
   - [ ] Public Safety
   - [ ] Human Resources
   - [ ] Administrative Technology
   - [ ] Budget
   - [ ] Academic Technology
   - [ ] Bursar
   - [ ] Auxiliary Facilities
   - [ ] Purchasing
   - [ ] Strategic Planning
   - [ ] Physical Plant
   - [ ] Internal Audit
   - [ ] Endowment
   - [ ] Other

8) How many direct reports do you have?

   [ ]
9) Which **three** skills are most important in your current position? Rank up to three of the skills below in rank order, with 1 being the most important:

- Accounting
- Human resources/staff management
- Negotiating
- Leadership development
- Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)
- Communications
- Financing and budgeting
- Other

10) Which board committees, if any, do you staff? Check all that apply.

- Finance
- Audit
- Investment/Endowment
- Strategic Planning
- Facilities/Buildings and Grounds
- Other

11) Of the following, identify the **three** duties on which you currently spend the most time:

- Entrepreneurial activities
- Supervising and managing personnel
- Budgeting/financial management
- Facilities, space allocation, and capital projects
- Accountability, accreditation, assessment
- Strategic planning
- Enrollment management
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alumni relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community relations and outreach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate relations/economic development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund raising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With other colleges and universities/consortia or other activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the governing board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13) Which of the following duties do you believe are the two most important parts of your job?

- Managing the institution's resources
- Getting a clean audit
- Appropriately engaging the community in financial decisions/Communicating
- Managing the institution's capital projects
- Managing the institution's endowment
- Leading change and fostering innovation
- Making important decisions even when unpopular
- Supporting the president and managing up
- Other

14) Which of the following duties does your president believe are the two most important parts of your job?

- Managing the institution's resources
- Getting a clean audit
- Appropriately engaging the community in financial decisions/Communicating
- Managing the institution's capital projects
- Managing the institution's endowment
- Leading change and fostering innovation
- Making important decisions even when unpopular
- Supporting the president and managing up
- Other
- Don't know

15) Which of the following duties do your colleagues on the cabinet believe are the two most important parts of your job?

- Managing the institution's resources
- Getting a clean audit
- Appropriately engaging the community in financial decisions/Communicating
- Managing the institution's capital projects
- Managing the institution's endowment
- Leading change and fostering innovation
- Making important decisions even when unpopular
- Supporting the president and managing up
- Other
- Don't know
16) Which two things do you find most frustrating?

- Meddlesome board members
- The belief by others that you are infinitely accessible (e-mails, meetings, etc.)
- Never enough money
- The difficulty of cultivating leadership in others
- Relationships with other administrators
- Campus infighting
- Unclear expectations and metrics of success for you in this position
- Unresponsive campus governance structures
- Communications
- Curmudgeonly faculty
- Other

17) With whom do you have the best relationship?

- President
- The chief advancement officer
- Other vice presidents
- The deans

18) With whom do you have the most challenging relationship?

- President
- The chief advancement officer
- Other vice presidents
- The deans
19) What is most important to retain you in your current position?
- Appreciation
- Fair compensation
- Increased responsibility/enlarged portfolio
- Other [ ]

20) Which of the following institutional policies have you implemented as CFO/CBO to create more flexibility in the personal and professional lives of faculty and staff, such as in addressing dependent-care issues?
- [ ] Flex time schedules
- [x] Job sharing
- [ ] Day care
- [ ] Salary equity programs
- [ ] None of the above
- [x] Other [ ]

21) What happened to the person previously serving in your position?
- [ ] Moved to a CFO/CBO position at another institution
- [ ] Took a position outside academe
- [ ] Moved to a presidency
- [ ] Retired
- [ ] Took another administrative position in academe (not president)
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Took a faculty position
- [ ] Don't Know
20) Overall, how satisfied are you in your position?
- Very Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

Section 3 - Your Career History

23) Choose the path that most accurately describes your career progression as an administrator:
- Whole career spent in higher education
- Came to current position by moving in and out of higher education
- Came to current position from outside of higher education

24) Which types of institutions have you worked at in higher education? Check all that apply

Institution types:
- Doctorate-granting university
- Master's college or university
- Baccalaureate college
- Associate's college
- Special-focus institution
- State System Office

Institution control:
- Public
- Private, nonprofit
- Private, for-profit
- State System Office
25) What percentage of your total career has been spent in higher education?
- 100%
- 50% to 99%
- 25% to 49%
- Less than 25%

26) Have you ever altered your career progression to care for a dependent, spouse, or parent?
- No
- Yes, left a previous position
- Yes, worked part-time/reduced schedule
- Yes, postponed job search or promotion
- Other [Yes, Other (Please Describe)]

For how many years did you alter your job circumstances?

27) Have you ever altered your career progression for your spouse's/partner's career?
- Yes
- No

28) Has your spouse/partner altered his or her career progression for your career?
- Yes
- No
29) Immediate Prior Position

Position held *immediately* before assuming your current assignment was:

- Inside higher education
- Campus president/chancellor/CEO

30) Institution of position held immediately before assuming your current assignment:

- Did not work at a college or university
- Same institution as current job
- Different institution from current job

Previous institution type:

- Doctorate-granting university
- Master’s college or university
- Baccalaureate college
- Associate’s college
- Special-focus institution
- State System Office

Previous institution control:

- Public
- Private, nonprofit
- Private, for-profit
- State System Office
Section 4 - Your Career Aspirations and Professional Development Opportunities

31) What is your expected next career move?
- Seek a presidency
- Seek another CFO/CBO position at a different college or university
- Seek a different administrative position at my current college or university
- Seek a faculty position (either at my current college or university or another educational institution)
- Seek work outside of higher education (e.g., corporation, government, nonprofit)
- Retire
- Don’t know/undecided

32) At what time do you hope to make your next career move?
- In less than one year
- 1 to 3 years
- 4 or more years
- Don’t know/undecided

33) Does your institution offer leadership development programs to identify and develop future campus leaders?
- Yes
- No

Are any of these programs specially developed for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of color</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment investing and management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial/budget forecasting and modeling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication with internal and external audiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitioning to retirement or other career changes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources and employee/staff management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory compliance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
35) Of the list of potential professional development opportunities from Question 34, which three (3) are the most important to you?

- [x] Effective communication with internal and external audiences
- [ ] Endowment investing and management
- [x] Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)
- [ ] Financial/budget forecasting and modeling
- [ ] Financial management
- [ ] Human resources and employee/staff management
- [ ] Leadership development
- [ ] Negotiation
- [x] Regulatory compliance
- [ ] Transitioning to retirement or other career changes

36) For each of the potential professional development opportunities, please select which learning format would work BEST meet your needs for participation? (Select one response for each opportunity.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Workshop/in-person instruction</th>
<th>Conference presentation</th>
<th>Synchronous online program (participants work together online)</th>
<th>Asynchronous online program (participants work individually online)</th>
<th>Webcast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial/budget forecasting and modeling</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial management</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication with internal and external audiences</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment investing and management</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources and employee/staff management</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitioning to retirement or other career changes</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory compliance</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 5 - Your Education and Demographic Characteristics

Please check all the degrees you have earned:

☐ Associate’s
☐ Bachelor’s
☐ MBA
☐ Other Master’s
☐ PhD or EdD
☐ DBA
☐ Law (e.g. JD, LLB, LLD, JSD)
☐ Other (e.g. M Div, D Div, etc.)

Are you a CPA?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Gender:

Year of Birth:

Are you Hispanic or Latino(a)?

What is your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply.)

☐ White
☐ Black/African American
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native
☐ Other

Marital status:

Do you have children?

Be sure to click the "Finish" button below to submit your response to NACUBO. If you want to review your responses before submission, hit the "Review" button.