



NASPA

Research and Policy
Institute



THE CHIEF STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER

*Responsibilities, Opinions,
and Professional Pathways
of Leaders in Student Affairs*

2014 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About NASPA's Research and Policy Institute

NASPA's Research and Policy Institute (RPI) intentionally links research, policy, and effective student affairs practice in support of student success and the strategic priorities of the association. The RPI generates scholarship and conducts policy analysis to articulate student affairs contributions to student success, learning, and development; interprets information to advance practice and policy conversations; and connects the research and policy activities of NASPA members to increase reach and impact. To learn more and access publications, blog postings, and data resources, please visit www.naspa.org/rpi.

About the Authors

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FOREWORD



The first annual survey of college and university chief student affairs officers (CSAOs) aims to understand how these leaders ascended to their positions, how they manage the complex day-to-day operations of a student affairs division, and how they perceive the challenging and changing environment of American higher education.

Some of the areas covered in the study include:

- Pathways into the profession and career aspirations of CSAOs;
- Critical issues facing higher education and the student affairs profession;
- Composition of student affairs divisions, reporting structures, and budget information; and
- Salary data of CSAOs, associate/assistant vice presidents, and other director-level staff.

In the pages that follow, we present an extensive executive summary of the study's findings from these areas and more, highlighting what we think are interesting and informative data points that add to the public's collective understanding of the role CSAOs are playing in American higher education. Subsequent publications, including a fuller version of this report, will present additional data and a more nuanced presentation than discussion in the executive summary allows.

We are deeply grateful for the time and care with which CSAOs responded to our request for

participation in this project. Although we were hopeful at the outset, we in no way anticipated that nearly 1 out of every 3 CSAOs in the United States would respond to the survey. Without their thoughtful participation, we would have little of value to share. We remain humbled and motivated by the appreciation and support we have received for this project.

This endeavor is useful in at least three ways. First, we see value in providing information about CSAOs to those outside the profession of student affairs. Whereas resources exist to glean the perspectives and professional goals of other presidential cabinet-level positions, there is an absence of in-depth, succinct, and reliable information on the CSAO. This report is an attempt to fill that notable void.

Second, we see this report as a potential resource for CSAOs to benchmark their professional environment against a robust collection of peers and across an array of domains. Peer comparisons are always useful and of seemingly endless interest to those within American higher education. Toward that end, this report allows an individual CSAO to contextualize his or her experience against a collection of more than 860 institutions on a range of topics both personal and institutional—from salary data and educational background to size of the student affairs division and number of direct reports.

Finally, we hope this report is useful for those who aspire to become a CSAO, that it lays out some data

to answer, in part, the often-asked question “What is the nature of your job?” so many of us have heard. This report is no substitute for conversation and mentoring, but it does provide a solid primer on the CSAO position and affords those interested in climbing to the top of the student affairs ladder a broad understanding of what may await them should they get there.

The successful completion of this report and the data-gathering process that underlies it would not be possible without the hard work and support of many people. We are especially grateful for the support of NASPA’s executive team, consisting of President Kevin Kruger, Vice President for Professional Development Stephanie Gordon, and Vice President for Operations Amy Shopkorn; to the NASPA Board of Directors and the James E. Scott Academy Board for their role in developing the project’s scope and aim; Senior Director of Publications Melissa Dahne for her work—and patience—in the publication of this report; and Senior Policy Analyst Edward J. Smith for being a thought partner throughout the project.

And finally, to the CSAOs who contributed their perspectives to this project by completing the survey, a heartfelt note of thanks and gratitude.

Brian A. Sponsler, EdD

Vice President for Research and Policy

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OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS



- Seven out of 10 (72%) chief student affairs officers (CSAOs) report directly to the institution's president or chancellor.
- Only 22% of CSAOs indicated a desire to become a college or university president, with an equal number (23%) undecided about such a career step—a response comparable to that of chief academic officers.
- Black (35%) and Hispanic (44%) CSAOs were more than twice as likely to aspire to become a college or university president than were their White (17%) colleagues.
- Of CSAOs who hold an advanced degree, 3 out of 4 concentrated in education or higher education as their field of study.
- CSAOs indicated that they spend nearly a third of their time (30%) on administrative tasks, compared to just 13% of their time interacting directly with students.
- Mental health concerns, diminishing resources, changing student demographics, and graduation rates were reported to be among the top issues facing colleges and universities.
- The five most commonly reported functional areas within student affairs divisions were: campus activities, student conduct, counseling services, orientation, and student affairs assessment.
- Veteran student services, student affairs assessment, and campus safety were among the functional areas most commonly added to student affairs divisions over the preceding 3 years.
- Financial aid, admissions, and intercollegiate athletics were among the most commonly removed functional areas from student affairs divisions over the preceding 3 years.
- The vast majority of CSAOs reported that budgets remained relatively stable from fiscal year 2012 (FY 2012) to fiscal year 2013 (FY 2013) and did not fluctuate more than +/- 5%. One quarter reported seeing no change, with 43% seeing either slight increases or decreases.
- As expected, the reported annual mean salary of CSAOs varied notably by Carnegie Classification, with those working at doctoral-granting and research institutions earning nearly twice that of their colleagues at associate-level colleges.

METHODOLOGY

The following report presents findings from a quantitative survey research study that was conducted through NASPA's Research and Policy Institute (RPI). The study's purpose was to gather information on and about chief student affairs officers (CSAOs) at U.S. colleges and universities. To achieve this objective, the RPI collected Web-based survey responses from 863 CSAOs, representing 240 public 4-year institutions, 366 private not-for-profit 4-year institutions, 234 public 2-year institutions, and a handful of private for-profit 4-year and 2-year institutions (Table 1). The sector distribution of responses mirrored that of the population as a whole (Figure 1).

The survey questionnaire was developed by RPI staff, in collaboration with selected members of the NASPA Board of Directors, the NASPA executive team, and several campus-level senior administrators. The survey was designed and administered using the Qualtrics software package. The survey was compatible with visual accommodation software.

RPI staff distributed an initial e-mail invitation for participation to the 2,844 individuals identified by the 2013 edition of the Higher Education Directory (HED) as holding a CSAO position. One targeted

e-mail reminder and one general final reminder were sent to nonrespondents. The overall participation rate was 30.35%.

30%
Overall Response Rate

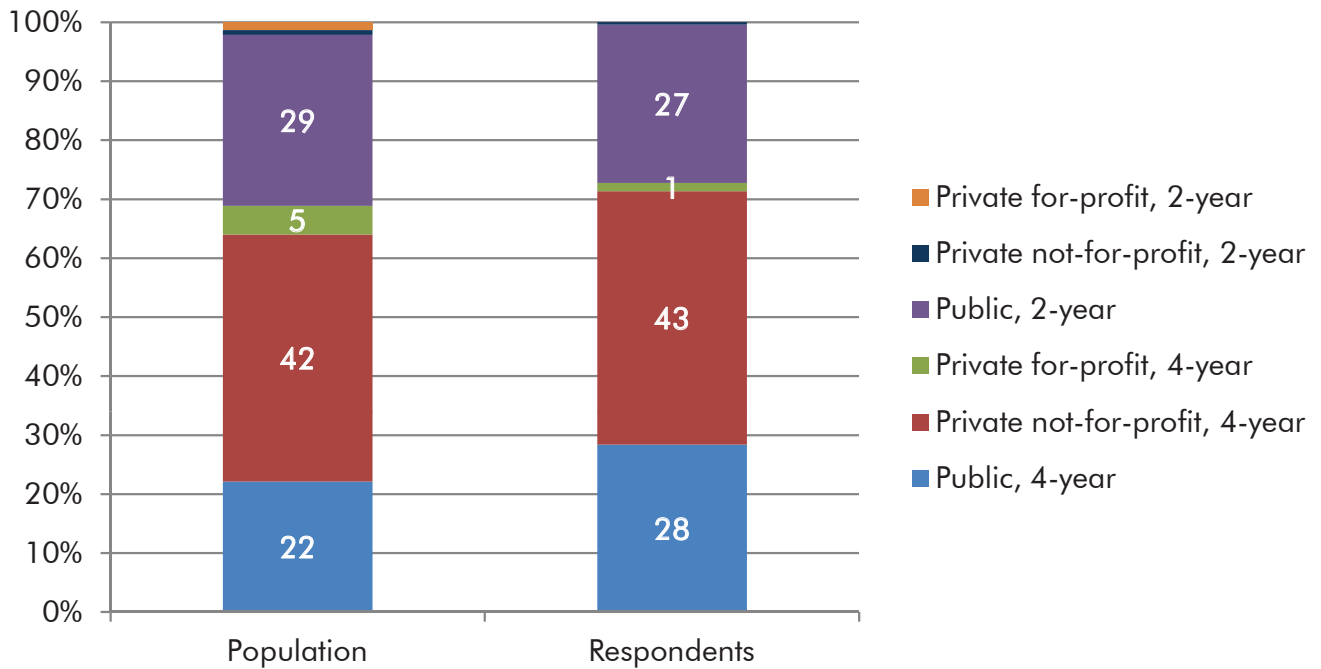
Table 1 | Total Participation by Sector ($n = 858$)

Sector	Number of Participants
Public, 4-year	240
Private not-for-profit, 4-year	366
Private for-profit, 4-year	13
Public, 2-year	234
Private not-for-profit, 2-year	4
Private for-profit, 2-year	1

Institutions are represented only once in the data. Sample sizes may fluctuate by item and are indicated in presentation of data, where appropriate. For analysis purposes, a survey was deemed "complete" if a respondent finished the first 5 of 7 total sections ($n = 782$). Data was reported by demographic characteristics and institutional characteristics, where possible and informative. For the population and survey respondents, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) institutional characteristics were matched to individuals and their responses using IPEDS IDs included in the HED extract. In some cases, due to rounding, the reported figures may not add up to 100%.

This report presents key findings of the survey and is written as an executive summary made publicly

Figure 1 | Distribution of Population and Survey Respondents, by Sector



available via the NASPA website. A subsequent publication for NASPA members and those who participated in the survey will present a more detailed review of the data, cut responses by additional demographic fields, and expand on salary levels

and student affairs division alignment. In addition, functional area profiles covering reporting structure, salary data, and job title of the person in charge of day-to-day operations will be published on a restricted basis in spring 2014.

KEY FINDINGS

Profiling the CSAO

Demographics

CSAOs provided rich data on their demographic characteristics, including age, race/ethnicity, gender, and educational background. In total, 863 CSAOs provided some amount of demographic information via the survey instrument; respondents were given the option of providing demographic information. For transparency, total responses received for each question are presented with appropriate figures and tables where deviations exist.

Collectively, CSAOs comprise a diverse professional

Table 2 | Response Count by Race/Ethnicity (n = 827)

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Respondents
American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Asian	12
Black	114
Hispanic	57
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2
White	633
Two or More Races	8

Note. Race and ethnicity categories follow those used by the Department of Education and the U.S. Census Bureau. Data for the following races were not reported due to small sample size: American Indian (n = 1) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (n = 2).

group in terms of age and race/ethnicity, and they demonstrate notable parity in gender distribution. As illustrated in Table 2 and Figure 2, CSAOs were more likely to be 50 years of age or older and to identify as White, non-Hispanic.

Along gender lines, nearly identical numbers of CSAOs self-identified as male (51%) as did female (49%). Although the option was present, no respondent self-identified as transgender.

Educational Background and Years in Current Position

CSAOs hold a diverse array of educational degrees (Table 3). Six out of 10 hold a doctoral degree or a professional degree. Of those holding a doctoral degree, 3 out of 4 completed their degrees in either general education or higher education (Table 4).

Table 3 | Terminal degree held by CSAOs

Degree	Percentage
Bachelor's	1%
Master's	38%
Professional	4%
Doctoral	56%
Other	1%

Figure 2 | Response Count by Age (n = 802)

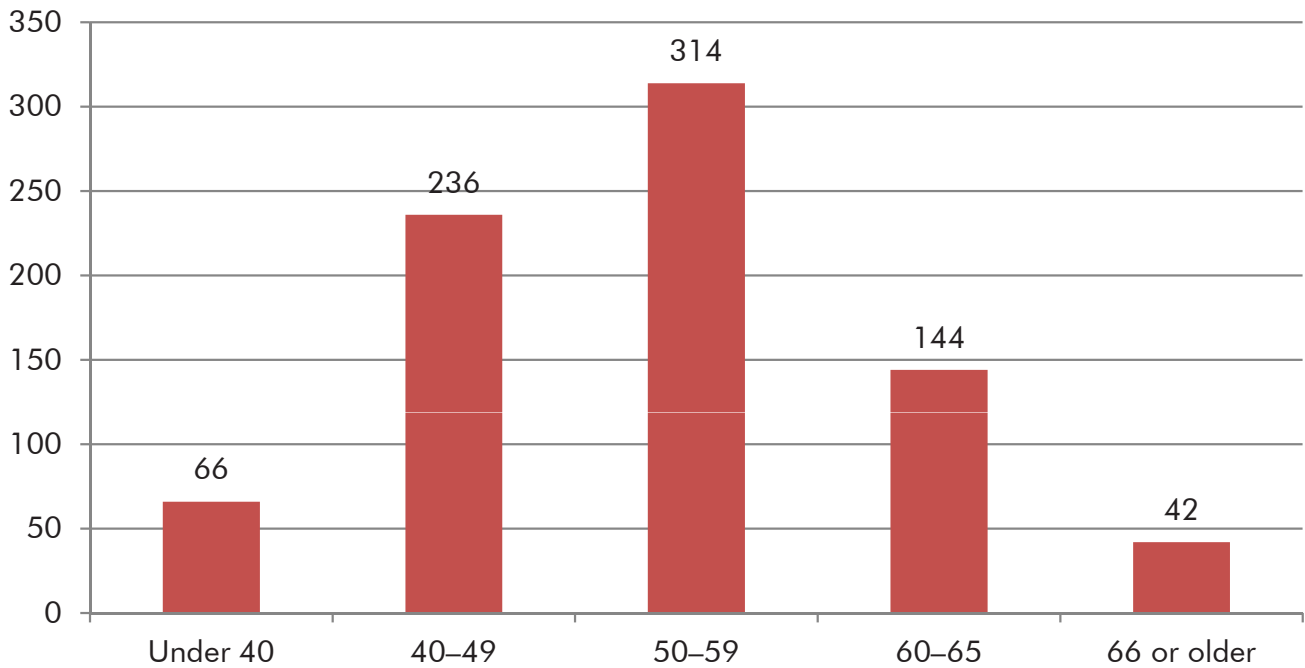


Figure 3 | Years Respondents Have Served as the CSAO at Current Institution

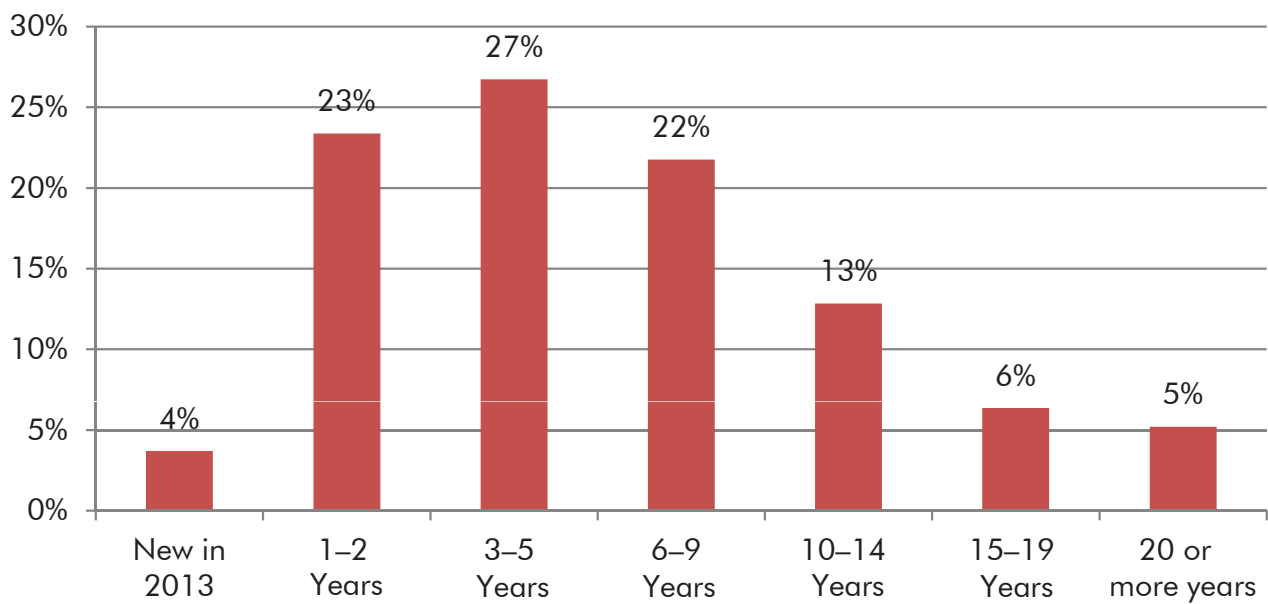


Table 4 | Doctoral Degree Field of Study

Field	Percentage
Education and Higher Education	75%
Social Sciences	17%
Humanities and Fine Arts	7%
Other	1%

In addition to degree information, CSAOs provided data on the length of time they have occupied their current positions (Figure 3). The majority of respondents have spent between 1 and 9 years in their current positions (72%). On average, CSAOs have spent 7 years at their current institutions. Although the data is of interest, this study did not capture total years an individual has been a CSAO over the course of his or her career.

Reporting Lines and Job Titles

Finally, 7 out of 10 CSAOs report directly to the institution's president or chancellor, with another 16% reporting to the chief academic officer or provost (Table 5). Future studies will use this baseline data to

Table 5 | Top Three Job Titles of Individuals to Whom CSAOs Report

Job Title	Percentage
President/Chancellor	72%
Provost/Chief Academic Officer	16%
Executive or Senior Vice President	6%

Table 6 | Most Common Job Titles for CSAOs

Job Title	Percentage
Vice President	48%
Dean	20%
Vice President and Dean	13%

support inquiry into any changes in reporting structures of CSAOs over time.

As with many job titles within higher education, nomenclature for the CSAO varied. Table 6 presents the three most commonly reported job titles for CSAOs. Within these buckets, there was variation by sector. For instance, a CSAO working at a private not-for-profit 4-year institution was 4 times as likely to hold the title "dean" as was his or her counterpart at a 4-year public institution (Table 7).

Career Paths and Aspirations

Career Pathways

Understanding how individuals come into the role of CSAO is informative on a number of fronts. First, it suggests pathways into the leading professional role within the field of student affairs, offering a roadmap for those interested in becoming a CSAO. Second, it provides a starting point for context about the perspectives and experiences that individuals may be likely to bring with them to the CSAO position. Finally, when collected over time, career path information identifies trends and changes in the hiring preferences for top institutional leadership posts.

The pathway into the CSAO role varies. When

Table 7 | Sector Influences Job Titles

Of CSAOs with the title "vice president":		Of CSAOs with the title "vice president and dean":		Of CSAOs with the title "dean":	
Sector	Percentage	Sector	Percentage	Sector	Percentage
From public 4-year	32%	From public 4-year	15%	From public 4-year	12%
From private not-for-profit 4-year	36%	From private not-for-profit 4-year	83%	From private not-for-profit 4-year	54%
From public 2-year	32%	From public 2-year	3%	From public 2-year	34%

asked to describe their career mobility prior to promotion to a CSAO position, a third (34%) of respondents indicated that they had worked at one institution for the majority of their careers prior to promotion to CSAO, while roughly another third (28%) indicated having changed institutions three or more times (Table 8).

Beyond demonstrating patterns of professional

mobility, individuals also reported varied professional experiences immediately prior to beginning their current CSAO positions (Figure 4).

Overall, it is most common for a CSAO to be an internal hire. A near majority of CSAOs (48%) indicated that they were employed at their current institution in a non-CSAO position as opposed to holding a non-CSAO position at another institution (26%).

Figure 4 | Position Held Immediately Prior to Current CSAO Position

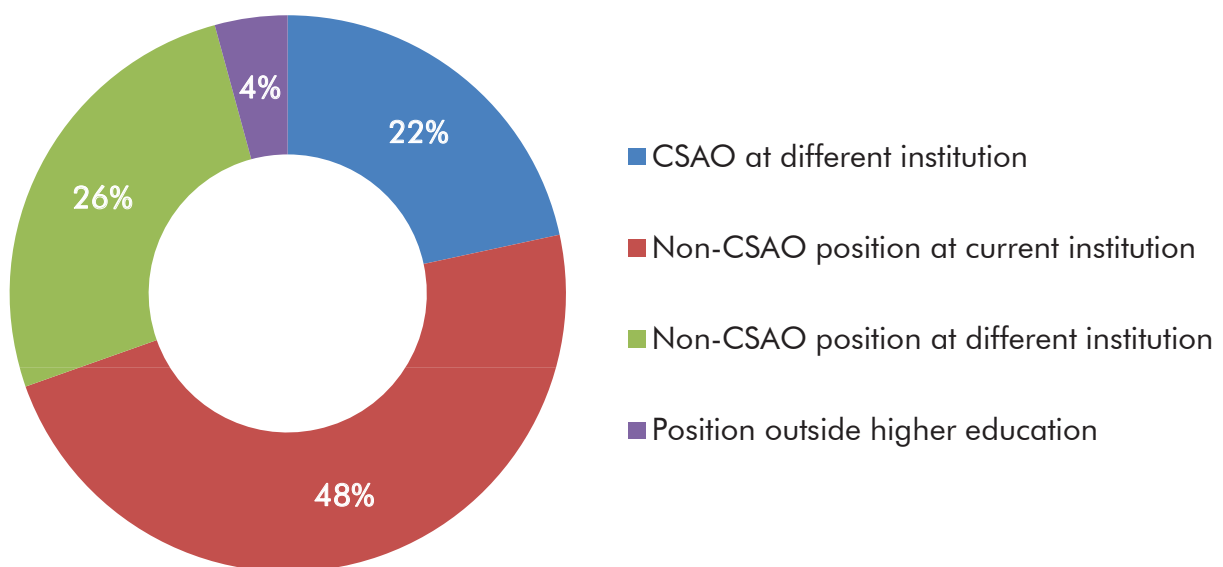


Table 8 | Description of Career Prior to Promotion to the CSAO Position

Career Description	Percentage
One institution for majority of career	34%
Changed institution once or twice	35%
Changed institution three or more times	28%
Moved in and out of higher education	4%

Additionally, only 1 in 5 (22%) CSAOs indicated a lateral transition, which is defined as moving from one CSAO position to another.

A “director-level” position was the most commonly reported job held by individuals prior to them obtaining their current CSAO position. The most commonly reported prior job titles for CSAO external hires (Table 9) and internal hires (Table 10) are presented.

Notably, the overwhelming majority of internal and external CSAO hires are coming from within the field of student affairs, suggesting the pipeline into the CSAO position runs strongly through student affairs divisions. In fact, fewer than 1 in 10 CSAOs reported holding a faculty or academic administrator position prior to assuming their current roles.

Although it was much more common for an individual to come into a CSAO position from within higher education, 4% of respondents did indicate that their prior professional role was not at a post-secondary institution. Table 11 lists the most common professional sectors reported by individuals coming

Table 9 | Previous Job Title for Non-CSAO at Different Institution (n = 210)

Job Title	Percentage
Director	27%
Dean	23%
Associate/Assistant Vice President	20%
Associate/Assistant Dean	19%
Faculty	1%
Assistant/Associate Vice Chancellor	1%
Other (within higher education, mixed open field)	9%

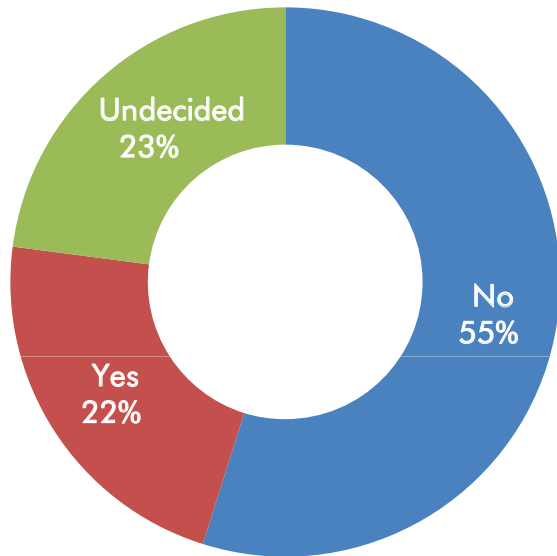
into CSAO roles from outside higher education. Not surprisingly, non-higher education CSAOs emerged from other not-for-profit sectors of the economy, including secondary education and the military.

Career Aspirations—The Presidency

As presented in Figure 5, 1 in 5 current CSAOs identified a professional goal of advancing to become a college or university president; 55% of CSAOs reported no interest in leading a postsecondary institution. Notably, female CSAOs were less likely to aspire to the presidency (59%) than were their male colleagues (50%), as shown in Figure 6.

In addition to these differences along gender lines, respondents of varying racial/ethnic backgrounds reported divergent views on aspiring to become a college or university president (Figure 7). Black

Figure 5 | Percentage of CSAOs Who Aspire to the College Presidency, Overall



(35%) and Hispanic (44%) CSAOs were more than twice as likely to aspire to be a college or university president than were their White (17%) colleagues.

When asked why they did not aspire to become a college or university president, CSAOs responded with a mixture of personal and professional reasons, ranging from concerns about time demands to questions about the politics of the search process (Table 12).

Duties and Responsibilities

Given the complexities of American higher education and the nuances involved in leading a student affairs division charged with supporting an increasingly diverse student population, time is appropriately viewed as a valuable and limited asset—that is, how CSAOs allocate their time is noteworthy for what it can tell us about institutional priorities and needs.

CSAOs were asked to indicate the percentage of

Table 10 | Previous Job Title for Non-CSAO at Current Institution (n = 393)

Job Title	Percentage
Dean	29%
Director	23%
Associate/Assistant Dean	19%
Associate/Assistant Vice President	17%
Faculty	6%
Other (within higher education, mixed open field)	6%

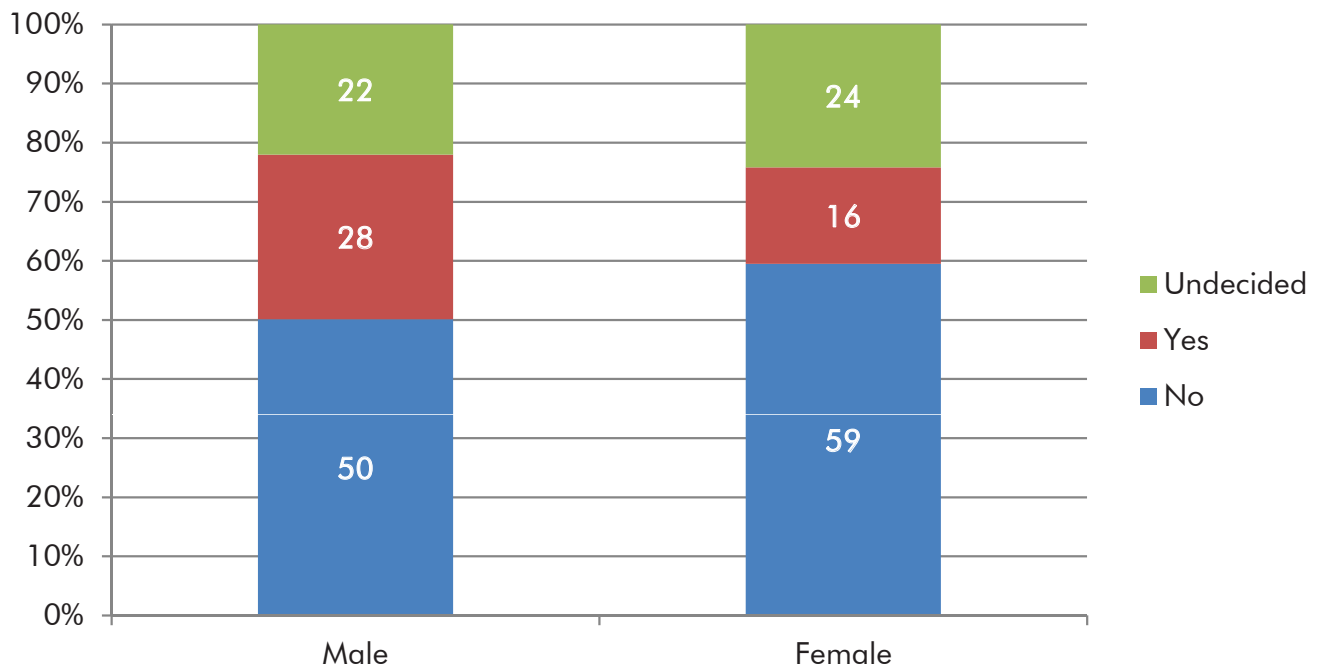
Table 11 | Top Three Sectors for CSAOs Whose Prior Position Was Outside Higher Education

Rank	Sector
1	Nonprofit (not educational institution)
2	Elementary and Secondary Education
3	Ministry or Religious

their time spent over a range of areas, from administrative activities to fundraising to crisis management. Figure 8 illustrates the average percentage of time CSAOs indicated that they spent across eight predefined areas.

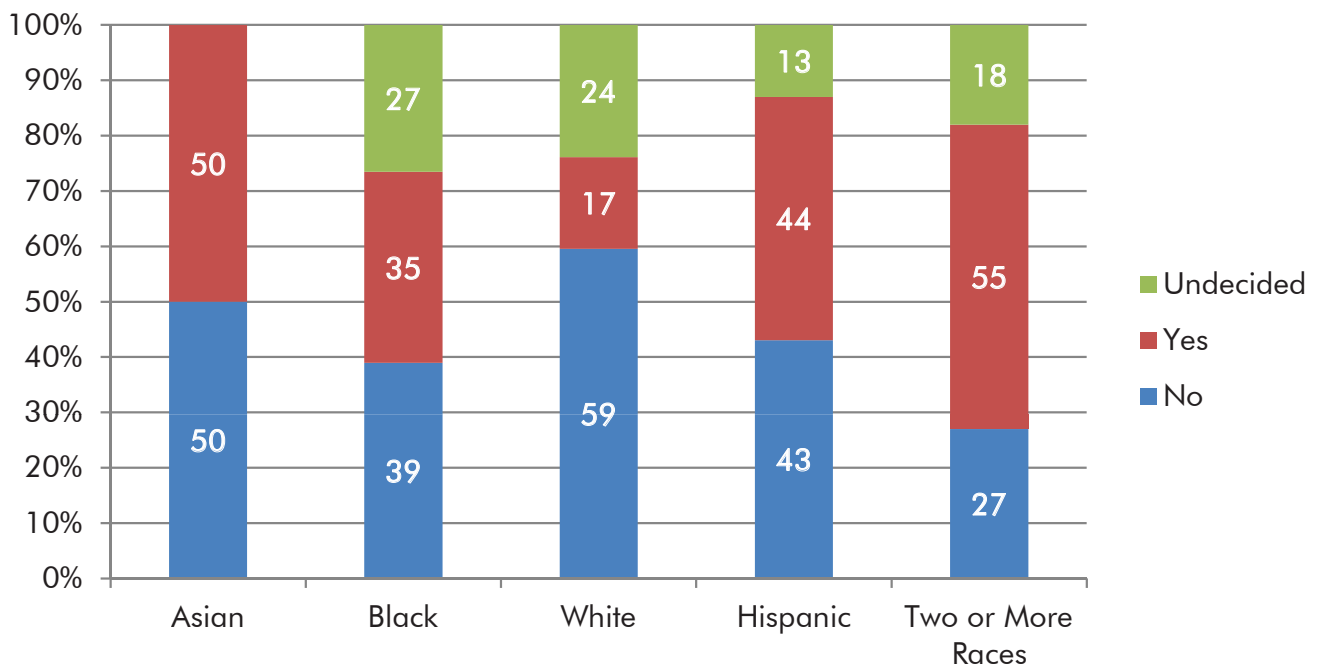
CSAOs reported spending more than twice as much time (30%) on administrative duties as they did on any other activity, except personnel management. Taken in total, time allocation responses suggest that more than 90% of CSAO time is spent on what could be

Figure 6 | Percentage of CSAOs Who Aspire to the College Presidency, by Gender



Note. No respondents self-identified as transgender. Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Figure 7 | Percentage of CSAOs Who Aspire to the College Presidency, by Race/Ethnicity



Note. Race and ethnicity categories follow those used by the Department of Education and the U.S. Census Bureau. Data for the following races were not reported due to small sample size: American Indian ($n = 1$) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ($n = 2$). Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Figure 8 | Average Percentage of Time Spent Performing Various Executive Tasks

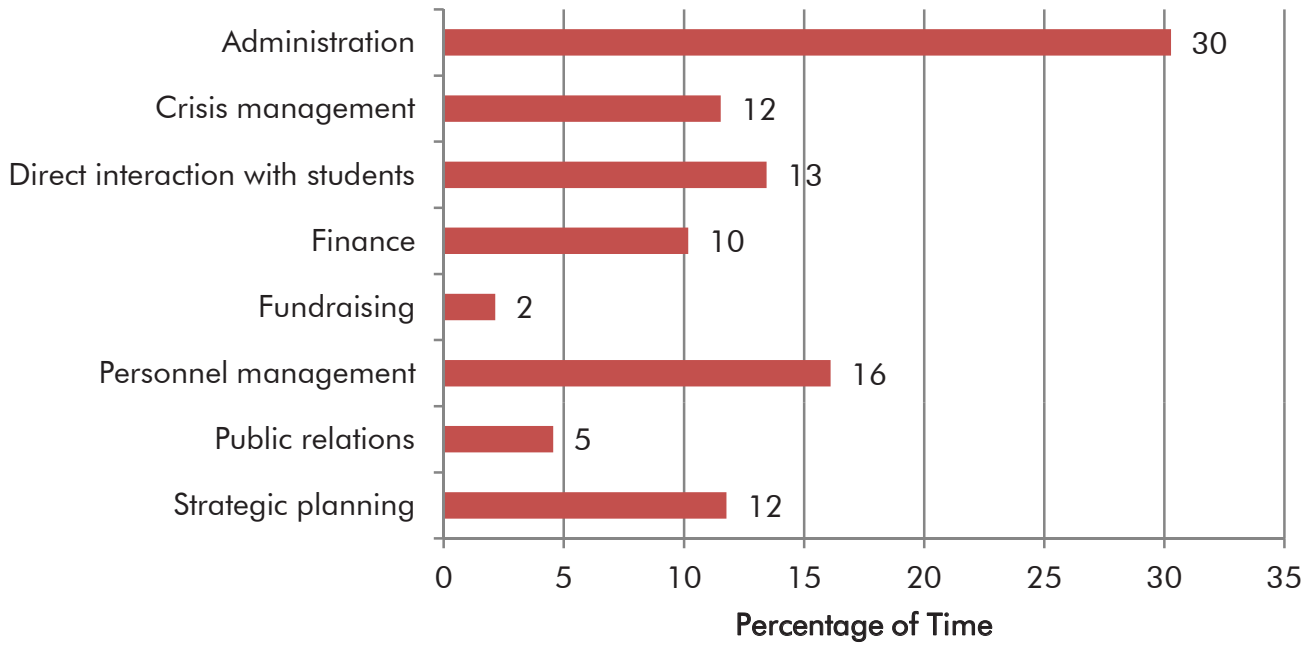


Figure 9 | Comparison of Current Time Allocation to Ideal Time Allocation

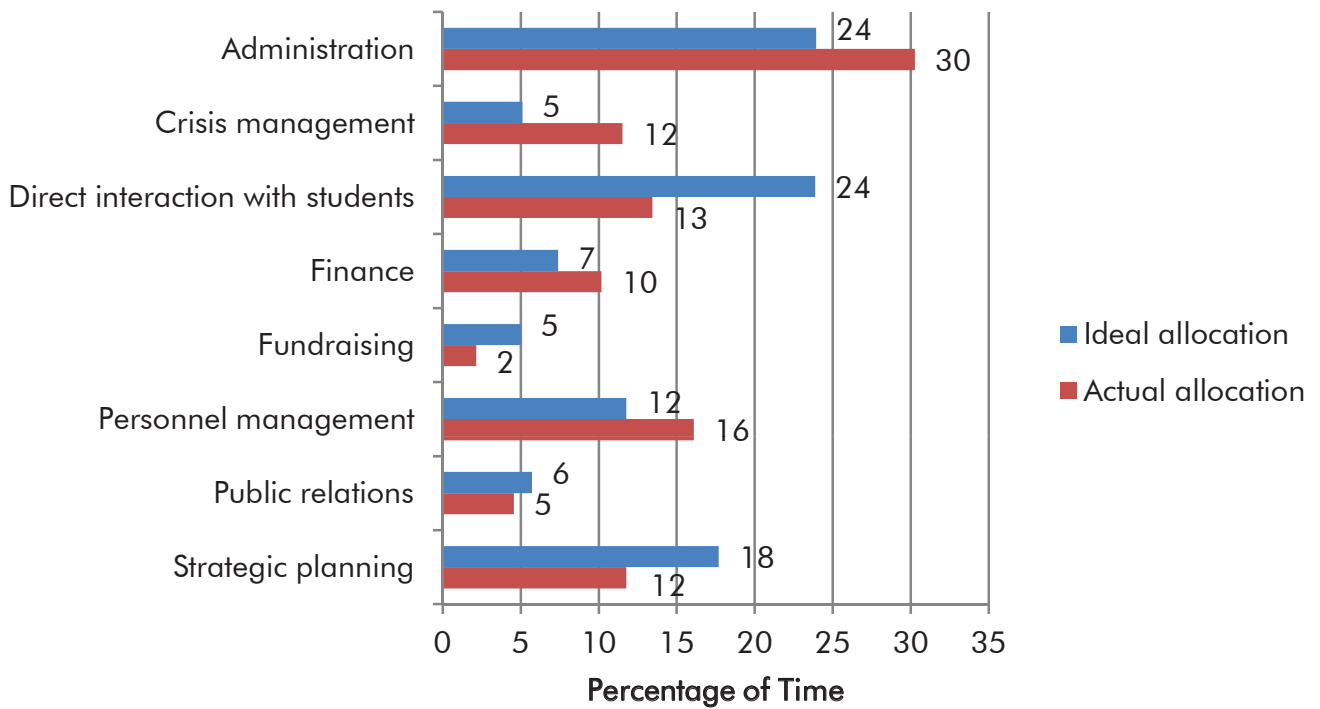


Table 12 | Top Five Reasons CSAOs Do Not Aspire to Serve as University President

Rank	Reason
1	Nature of the work is unappealing
2	Time demands of the position
3	Do not want to live “in a fishbowl”
4	Do not feel prepared to succeed in the position
5	Not comfortable with the search process and politics of selection

considered internal institutional activities (personnel management, direct interaction with students) and that very little time is spent on externally focused responsibilities, such as public relations or fundraising.

In addition to self-reported time allocation, CSAOs were asked how they would prefer, in an ideal world, to spend their professional time. Figure 9 reports the results.

Not surprisingly, CSAOs expressed a desire to spend significantly more time directly interacting with students and less time on administrative tasks and personnel management. In addition, CSAOs were more interested in strategic planning, fundraising, and public relations than current time allocation allows.

Top Issues on Campus

According to CSAOs, mental health concerns, diminishing resources, shifting student demographics, and graduation rates are among the most pressing issues confronting higher education.

CSAOs were asked to select top “health, wellness, and safety issues”; top “administrative issues”; top “campus culture” issues; and top “student learning and success” issues, from four predefined lists.

In Table 13, the top three issues identified by CSAOs are highlighted from the full list of choices in each of the four issue areas. Results from this year’s survey provide a baseline for assessment of any changes over time of issues perceived to be of critical importance to higher education broadly and to the field of student affairs in particular.

Cataloging the Student Affairs Division

Student Affairs Functional Areas

Just like the individuals who hold CSAO positions, the ways institutions organize student support services is diverse and often unique.

Cataloguing student affairs divisions is a first step in filling a gap in the higher education communities’ ability to create appropriate peer comparison groups in the field of student affairs. Accurately assessing the impact of various student supports on outcomes of interest; appropriately comparing student affairs expenditures across institutions; and constructing meaningful reference groups to identify promising practices require consideration of how divisions are structured.

To begin to catalogue the different ways in which student affairs divisions structure themselves, CSAOs responded to a series of questions about institutional offerings.

First, CSAOs reviewed a comprehensive list of functional areas and selected those offered at their institution. Next, working off the list of services provided at their

Table 13 | What Are the Three Most Pressing Issues Facing Your Campus Today?

Top Three Health, Wellness, and Safety Issues on Campus	
Rank	Issue
1	Mental health concerns
2	Alcohol abuse
3	Illicit drug abuse
4	Suicide prevention
5	Sexual assault
6	Prescription drug abuse
7	Violence
8	Firearms

Top Three Campus Culture Issues on Campus	
Rank	Issue
1	Changing student demographics
2	Diversity, equity, and inclusion
3	Campus safety
4	Campus-community relations
5	International students
6	Athletics/student athlete concerns

Top Three Administrative Issues on Campus	
Rank	Issue
1	Diminishing resources
2	Compliance and regulatory requirements
3	Strategic planning
4	Managing crises on campus
5	Construction of new facilities
6	Reorganization
7	Development of online student services
8	Social media strategy
9	Fundraising
10	Outsourcing

Top Three Student Learning and Success Issues on Campus	
Rank	Issue
1	Completion/Graduation rate
2	Persistence
3	Assessment and accountability
4	Cocurricular learning outcomes
5	Civic learning and democratic engagement
6	Parental involvement
7	Study abroad

Table 14 | Distribution of Student Affairs Functional Areas Across Three Tiers, Based on Percentage of Institutions Indicating Functional Area Is at Institution and Housed in the Student Affairs Division

High Concentration (At Least 66% of Institutions)		Medium Concentration (Between 40% and 65% of Institutions)		Low Concentration (Less Than 40% of Institutions)	
Functional Area	Percentage	Functional Area	Percentage	Functional Area	Percentage
Campus activities	98%	Community service/ Service-learning	62%	On-campus dining	39%
Student conduct/ Case management (behavioral)	97%	Clinical health programs	59%	Financial aid	38%
Counseling services	89%	Commuter student services	54%	Academic advising	37%
Orientation	88%	College unions	54%	Campus safety	36%
Student affairs assessment	80%	LGBTQ student services	52%	Registrar	35%
Career services	73%	Veterans' services	52%	Intercollegiate athletics	35%
Student conduct/ Academic integrity	72%	Student affairs research and evaluation	49%	Learning assistance/ Academic support services	34%
Wellness programs	70%	International student services	48%	TRIO/Educational opportunity	30%
Disability support services	70%	Nontraditional-student services	48%	Student affairs fundraising and development	24%
On-campus housing	69%	Spirituality, spiritual life, campus ministry	46%	Women's center	18%
Recreational sports	66%	Student media	44%	Graduate and profes- sional student services	17%
Multicultural services	66%	Greek affairs	43%	Alumni programs	4%
		Civic learning and democratic engagement	41%		
		Enrollment management	41%		
		Admissions	40%		

Table 15 | Five Most Frequently Added Functional Areas in the Past 3 Years

Rank	Functional Area
1	Veterans' services
2	Student affairs assessment
3	Campus safety
4	Career services
5	Wellness programs

institution, CSAOs were asked to indicate whether the functional area was part of the student affairs division.

Results of this iterative process allows for identification of functional areas that are most commonly reported to be part of student affairs divisions. The five most commonly reported functional areas within student affairs divisions were, in order: campus activities, student conduct, counseling services, orientation, and student affairs assessment.

Table 14 presents three groupings (high, medium, and low concentration) of student affairs functions, with the corresponding percentage of CSAOs who reported that the functional area was housed within the institution's student affairs division.

Changes in Divisional Structure

Student affairs divisions are not stagnate, as indicated by CSAOs who reported a frequency of division change. Tables 15 and 16 present the five functional areas most commonly added or removed from student affairs divisions over the prior 3 years.

Table 16 | Five Most Frequently Removed Functional Areas in the Past 3 Years

Rank	Functional Area
1	Career services
2	Financial aid
3	Intercollegiate athletics
4	International student services
5	Admissions

Notably, "career services" appears on both lists. Although speculative, one interpretation of this data point is that the increased focus on career placement and postgraduate earnings has led institutions to reshuffle career service supports in order to reach more students in more effective ways. Additional research would be useful to tease out the specific reasons why career services appears to be less fixed in organizational hierarchies than are other student support services.

Student Affairs Budgets

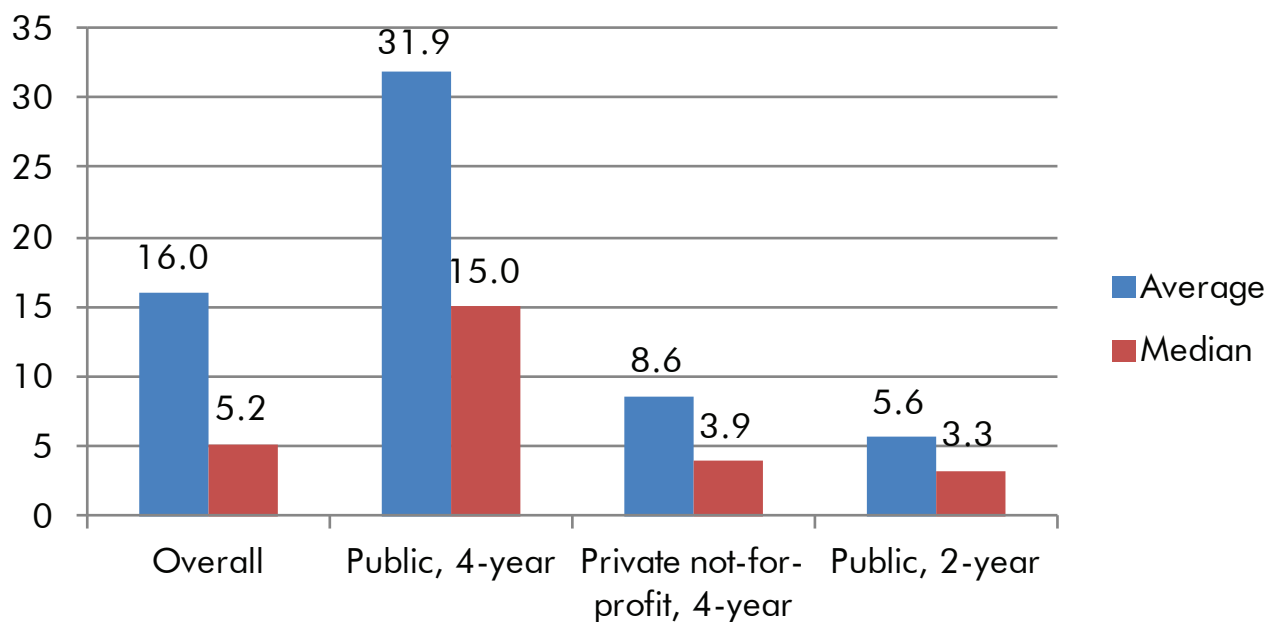
Overall, student affairs budgets were reported to remain relatively stable from fiscal year 2012 to fiscal year 2013, with nearly equal numbers indicating an increase (14%) or decrease (15%) of between 5% and 15%. The vast majority of CSAOs reported that budgets did not fluctuate more than +/- 5%, with a quarter seeing no change and nearly twice as many seeing small increases (28%) as small decreases (15%) (Table 17).

The average and median reported student affairs division expenditures varied widely by sector (Figure 10), with public 4-year institutions reporting higher expenditures than did public 2-year or private not-for-profit 4-year institutions.

Table 17 | Reported Change in Student Affairs Division Expenditures, Fiscal Year 2012 to 2013

Budget Fluctuation	Percentage
Increased more than 15%	2%
Increased 5–15%	14%
Increased 0–5%	28%
No change	24%
Decreased 0–5%	15%
Decreased 5–15%	15%
Decreased more than 15%	2%

Figure 10 | Average and Median Student Affairs Division Expenditures Fiscal Year 2012 to 2013 in Millions of Dollars, by Sector



Note. Data for private for-profit 4-year institutions ($n = 13$), private not-for-profit 2-year institutions ($n = 4$), and private for-profit 2-year institutions ($n = 1$) are not included due to small sample size.

Student Affairs Salary Information

Chief Student Affairs Officers Salary Data

For CSAOs, the reported annual median salary for fiscal year 2013 was \$120,000. As would be expected, there were noticeable differences in CSAO pay by Carnegie Classification. At doctoral-granting and research universities (public and private not-for-profit institutions combined), CSAOs earned, on average, \$199,000. In contrast, CSAOs working at master's-level institutions earned, on average, \$130,000; those working at baccalaureate-level institutions earned, on average, \$112,500. CSAOs working at associate-level colleges earned a reported average salary of \$101,000.

Wide variations in salaries were observed in the data, across both institutional and demographic characteristics. A more detailed discussion of CSAO salary data is presented in the full version of this report.

Associate/Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Salary Data

Associate/assistant vice presidents of student affairs (AVPs) are an emerging professional role within the field. AVPs hold very diverse professional portfolios, a fact identified within and between postsecondary sectors. Functional area oversight and number of direct reports were major contributors to observed salary variations across the survey responses. Overall, the median reported AVP salary was \$90,000. Table 18 provides a top-line overview of AVP median salary by Carnegie Classification.

As is the case with CSAO salary data, demographic characteristics and institutional structure were

Table 18 | AVP Median Salary, by Carnegie Classification

Institution Type	AVP Median Salary
Associate colleges	\$81,600
Baccalaureate colleges	\$70,000
Master's-granting colleges	\$90,000
Doctoral-granting and research universities	\$125,000

significant drivers of AVPs' compensation. A deeper discussion of AVP salary data is presented in the full version of this report.

Note on Salary Data for Functional Area Leaders

Through the CSAO survey, a number of data points were gathered at the functional-area level. For each functional area reported to be located within the student affairs division, data was gathered on the job title of the individual responsible for day-to-day operations, the salary for this individual, and the level (director, AVP, or CSAO) of the person to whom the area leader reports.

For example, the three most common titles for individuals responsible for campus activities are: director (64%), coordinator (9%), and assistant or associate dean (8%). The individual responsible for the day-to-day operation of campus activities earns a median salary of \$54,000 and is most likely to report directly to an associate or assistant vice

president if he or she works at an institution with that level of administration.

As part of the full report, individual functional-area profiles have been created, and they contain information equivalent to and more expansive than the

example above. Additionally, forthcoming reports and interactive tools will allow for more extensive access to salary information and other data points overviewed in this executive summary. □

ABOUT NASPA

NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education is the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. We serve a full range of professionals who provide programs, experiences, and services that cultivate student learning and success in concert with the mission of our colleges and universities. Founded in 1919, NASPA comprises more than 13,000 members in all 50 states, 25 countries, and 8 U.S. Territories.

Through high-quality professional development, strong policy advocacy, and substantive research to inform practice, NASPA meets the diverse needs and invests in realizing the potential of all its members under the guiding principles of integrity, innovation, inclusion, and inquiry. NASPA members serve a variety of functions and roles, including the vice president and dean for student life, as well as professionals working within housing and residence life, student unions, student activities, counseling, career development, orientation, enrollment management, racial and ethnic minority support services, and retention and assessment.