



The American College President in 2023 and Beyond

American Council on Education | Education Futures Lab

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Introduction

Welcome & Background

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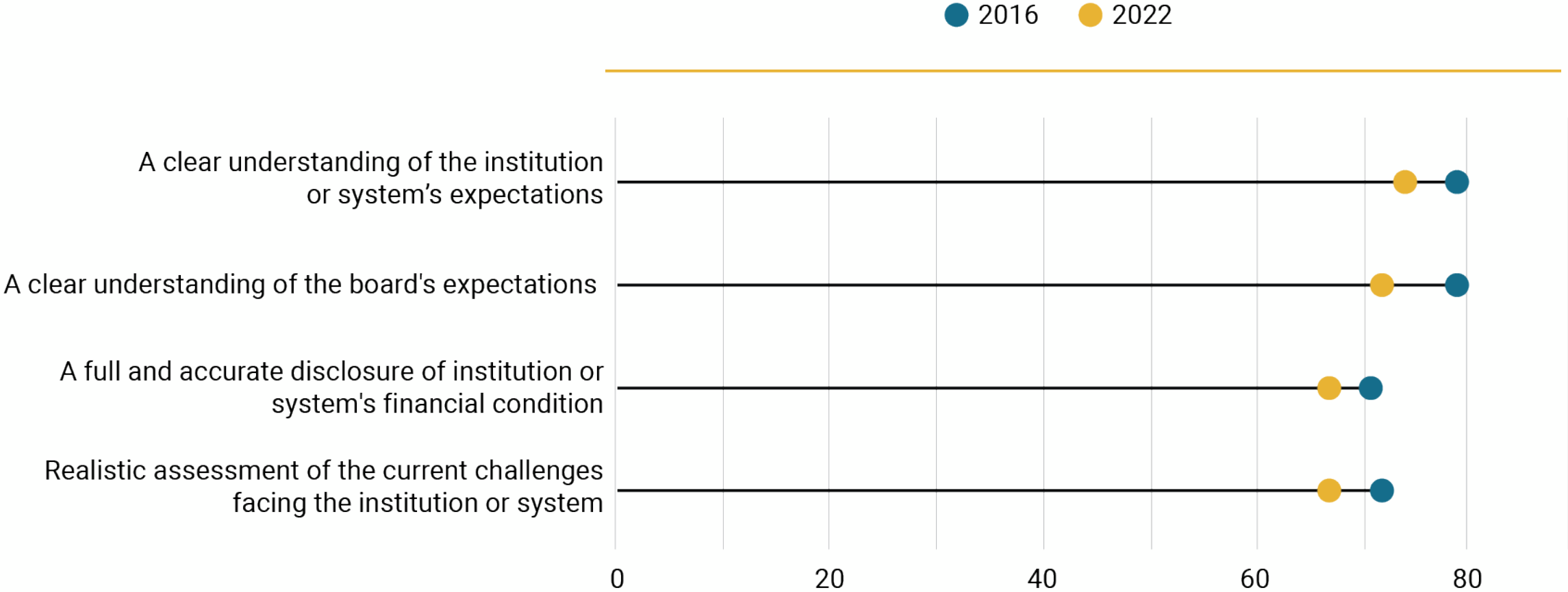
Presentation of Key Findings

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Key Finding #1: Making Representation a Priority

- Student, faculty, and staff diversification has been a priority, but these efforts have not reached the C-Suite to scale.
 - Men still **outnumber women 2:1** in the college presidency
 - A **10 percentage-point gap** exists between White presidents and presidents of color when asked if the search process gave them a realistic assessment of the challenges facing the institution or system.

Perception of Disclosures Within the Search Process: 2022 and 2016



Notes: Percentages represent those who answered 'yes' to each question. | Data from 2022 are weighted by Carnegie Classification.

Key Finding #2: With Challenge, Comes Opportunity

- There's been little movement towards representation by race, ethnicity, and gender. But imminent opportunity exists due to anticipated churn and turnover.
 - In their current positions, **one in four** presidents anticipate stepping down within the next year or two; **30 percent** in the next 3-5 years.
 - Higher education needs to create opportunities for presidents to **aspire to the presidency earlier in their careers and by different pathways**, particularly for women leaders and leaders of color.
 - Even if opportunities are created, the sector must **interrogate what draws or repels** quality leaders to the college presidency.

Table 2.3. Average Age of First Presidential Aspiration, Application, and Appointment, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity: 2022

Average Age (in Years)	Aspiration	Application	Appointment	Aspiration to Appointment Time Difference
Total	44.9	49.8	51.7	(+) 6.8
Men	43.6	49.0	51.0	(+) 7.4
Women	46.9	51.3	52.8	(+) 5.9
Men of color	41.5	48.4	50.4	(+) 8.9
Women of color	45.7	50.6	51.6	(+) 5.9

Note: These are averages within the sample and not weighted by Carnegie Classification.

Key Finding #3: Presidential Leadership and Support in the New Normal

- Presidents are at the forefront of reimagining how higher education serves students and society. Support from boards and C-Suite leaders is increasingly critical as presidents approach new demands in leading the institutions of tomorrow.
 - Approximately **two out of three** presidents report some level of agreement they **struggle to find people who understand the experience of being a president.**
 - The context of leadership today exists beyond the presidency proper – **the lived experiences, personal obligations, and operating realities influence the scope of presidential leadership.**

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