WHAT IT MEANS TO BE

WHAT’S THE AVERAGE TENURE of currently sitting business school deans? What position serves as the most common springboard into the dean’s office? What are the most critical issues and pressures business school administrators face today? AACSB International’s recently released 2014-2015 Deans Survey explores these and other questions related to leadership at its member schools. The survey, which is based on responses from 574 deans and 76 interim deans in 61 countries, shows that new deans continue to outnumber their veteran counterparts. And when deans rank their most pressing priorities, improving their schools’ reputations and achieving accreditation come out on top.

AGE & GENDER

AGE OF YOUNGEST DEANS IN THE SURVEY, LEADING SCHOOLS IN ASIA AND LACC*

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<tr>
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<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
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<td>AFRICA</td>
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*Latin America & Caribbean

ACCREDITED: 280, 62
NON-ACCREDITED: 40, 43

AGE OF OLDEST DEAN IN THE SURVEY, LEADING A SCHOOL IN NORTH AMERICA

57 MEAN AGE OF CURRENT DEANS 69% DEANS IN FIRST DEANSHIP

Women make up 19 percent of responding deans in the 2014 survey, compared to 17 percent in 2012.

WORLD TRAVELS

29% of deans have spent 6+ years outside their current schools’ home countries
43% of deans have spent 6 months or less outside their current countries

COUNTRIES DEANS HAVE LIVED IN, OTHER THAN THOSE OF THEIR CURRENT SCHOOLS
DEAN

PRIOR POSITIONS

IN EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

Prior to becoming deans, the nonacademics were:

- 4% in executive positions
- 12% in government
- 8% in nonprofits or NGOs
- 12% in self-employed
- 52% in other positions

Of survey respondents, 394 are in their first deanship, up from 356 in the 2011-2012 survey. Among first-time deans, 59.3 percent have been in the position three years or less. About 46 percent were hired from within the institution, and 35.4 percent of new deans were encouraged by mentors to pursue the position.

LAST POSITION BEFORE CURRENT DEANSHIP

- Dean: 20.8%
- Department Head/Chair: 16.6%
- Associate Dean: 15.9%
- Faculty Member: 12.5%
- Interim/Acting Dean: 10.6%
- Vice Dean: 6.9%
- Other Academic: 6.7%
- Nonacademic: 4.8%
- Program Director: 4.6%
- Assistant Dean: 0.4%

LAST POSITION BEFORE FIRST DEANSHIP

- Department Head/Chair: 21.9%
- Associate Dean: 21.7%
- Interim/Acting Dean: 14.4%
- Faculty Member: 13.6%
- Vice Dean: 8.9%
- Other Academic: 8.1%
- Nonacademic: 5.5%
- Program Director: 5.5%
- Assistant Dean: 0.5%

IN THE INTERIM

Among interim deans who responded, nearly 69 percent are serving their first appointments. The majority previously served as associate deans (25.7 percent), faculty (24.3 percent), or department chairs (17.6 percent). On average, they expect to spend 1.6 years in the position before a full-time dean is hired, and 58.3 percent are interested in the job. The majority were internal candidates who were either invited to serve without a search process (31.5 percent) or received the job after an internal search (32.9 percent). Only 5.5 percent came to the interim position from outside the school—up from 0 percent in 2011-2012.

76 interim deans responded, including 16 women and 58 men.

*2 did not specify
**PAST EXPERIENCE**

**TYPES OF EXPERIENCE DEANS BRING TO THEIR JOBS**

- 47% More academic than professional
- 23.2% Equal parts professional and academic
- 19.6% Entirely academic
- 8.9% More professional than academic
- 1.3% Entirely professional

**THE PRESSURES**

**HOW DEANS RATE TASKS ON THEIR TO-DO LISTS**

- Improve school reputation: 4.2
- Achieve initial or reaffirmation of AACSB accreditation: 4.2
- Develop faculty: 4.1
- Develop strategic plan: 4.0
- Improve relations with business: 3.9
- Increase external funding: 3.9
- Improve educational programs: 3.9
- Develop or solidify school mission: 3.8
- Improve faculty research: 3.7
- Improve faculty teaching: 3.7
- Improve alumni relations: 3.7
- Leverage technology for competitive advantage: 3.2
- Improve in rankings: 3.2
- Improve image across campus: 3.1
- Reduce conflict between departments: 2.4

**HOW DEANS RATE THE MOST CRITICAL PRESSURES THEY FACE**

- Budget issues: 4.0
- Faculty recruitment & retention: 3.9
- Fundraising: 3.7
- Student enrollments: 3.6
- Accreditation: 3.6
- Competition from other schools/providers: 3.6
- Faculty development: 3.4
- Faculty demands: 3.4
- Internationalization: 3.2
- Rankings: 3.1
- Technological adoption in the curriculum: 3.0
- Changes in student demographics: 2.5
- Nontraditional student programs: 2.4

Deans have spent a mean 4.3 years in their positions, down from 4.6 years in 2011–2012. Those in their posts the longest are in Northern America (3.7 years), Europe (30 years), and LACC (15 years). The mean tenure of the previous deans at responding schools is 6.1 years, with the longest prior term at 41 years and the shortest, six months. Only 28.5 percent of these deans have held tenures of one term—or these, 42.4 percent are at accredited schools. The survey finds that 12.9 percent of deanships are endowed—among them, nearly 82 percent are at U.S. schools.