



OK, Boomer ... or is it?

Americans' most senior professors aren't going anywhere. Can the same be said of the institutions that employ them?

By Richard A. Skinner, PhD

Senior Consultant, Harris Search Associates

December 31, 1993, isn't likely to show up on any timeline featuring key dates in the evolution of American higher education, but it's central to a historical watershed that continues to shape the academy two decades into the 21st century.

That date — often overlooked and more often underappreciated — marked the expiration of a federal statutory exemption that had allowed U.S. colleges and universities to enforce certain mandatory-retirement guidelines years after most other employers had lost that prerogative. Accordingly, as of January 1, 1994, tenured professors across the country essentially won the right to stay in the lecture hall and/or the lab as long as they wanted, barring gross misconduct.

More than a quarter-century later, the fallout is far-reaching. In short, the nation's colleges and universities are awash in long-serving (read: aging) professors, many of whom have no intention of retiring any time soon, if ever.

"A growing proportion of the nation's professors are at the same point in their career: still working, but with the end of their careers in sight," Audrey Williams June wrote in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. "Their tendency to remain on the job as long as their work is enjoyable — or, during economic downturns, long enough to make sure they have enough money to live on in retirement — has led the professoriate to a crucial juncture."¹

Any valid assessment of that "crucial juncture" and its implications — for academia and, more broadly, for society — must start with a brief examination of its scope and its genesis.

Keeping their faculties

In 2018, nearly 30 percent of professors — "postsecondary teachers" in the parlance of the Bureau of Labor Statistics — were 55 or older, compared with 23 percent of the U.S. workforce as a whole. More than 10 percent of professors were 65 or older, again roughly twice the corresponding figures for the overall workforce.²

From 2000 to 2010 alone, professors over the age of 65 doubled in number, and their median age overtook those of virtually all other occupational groups recognized by the federal government.³ Studies suggest that this cohort will continue to grow for some time.

According to a 2014 analysis by the financial services company TIAA (then known as TIAA-CREF), professors are more than twice as likely as the remainder of the workforce to delay retirement.⁴

Other studies have yielded similar findings. A 2013 survey by Fidelity Investments revealed that close to three-fourths of professors planned to work past age 65 — or never retire at all.⁵ That same year, another group of researchers concluded that 60 percent of postsecondary faculty members would stick around past age 70 and that 15 percent would stay past age 80.⁶

Seasoned to protection

The foregoing numbers may speak for themselves, but what, exactly, are they *saying*? Indeed, the statistics beg a couple of overarching questions.

First, why are so many professors extending their careers? The flippant answer is obvious: *Because they can.*

The more thoughtful response: Like most people in developed nations, American college professors are not only living longer but also staying physically fit, mentally sharp, and socially engaged well into their latter years.

Some faculty members are concerned about outliving their retirement savings, especially if they toil in academic disciplines that don't command hefty salaries. Interestingly but perhaps not surprisingly, professorial staying power (or obstinance, depending on one's perspective) varies by discipline. Those who teach in fields in which external consulting opportunities abound (e.g., business, engineering, and the health professions) appear more likely to retire than those with fewer extracurricular outlets — namely, those who teach in the arts, the humanities, and the natural sciences.⁷

The biggest motivator, however, doesn't have anything to do with actuarial tables, blood panels, or investment portfolios. According to the aforementioned Fidelity survey, eight in 10 professors who put off retirement do so simply because they enjoy what they do. More specifically, 89 percent want to stay busy and productive, 64 percent love their work too much to give it up, and 41 percent fear losing their institutional connections.⁸

"Higher-education employees, especially faculty, are deeply committed to their students, education, and the institutions they serve," noted John Rangoni, Fidelity's vice president of tax-exempt services.⁹

The second overarching question: So what? Does it matter that the typical tenured professor now looks a lot more like John Houseman's Charles Kingsfield in *The Paper Chase* than Russell Crowe's John F. Nash Jr. in *A Beautiful Mind* — never mind Denzel Washington's Melvin B. Tolson in *The Great Debaters*?

In other words, does the current glut of septuagenarian and even octogenarian professors have any real ramifications for the schools that pay their salaries, for the funders that support their research, or for the students who look to them for wisdom and guidance?

The short answer is *yes, yes, and yes.*

The complexity of the issue, however, warrants a more nuanced explanation.

"There is no doubt that senior faculty members play a critical role in mentoring junior researchers, provide invaluable service to their institutions and research communities, and are pivotal in experience transition and network connections," Virginia Tech researchers Navid Ghaffarzadegan and Ran Xu wrote in the scientific journal *PLOS One*. "However, a continuously aging faculty also poses many institutional challenges."¹⁰

Longtime higher-education journalist Jon Marcus is far less sanguine about the import, and impact, of senior — *really* senior — faculty.

GOING INTO OVERTIME

Here, according to a survey by Fidelity Investments, are the reasons that senior faculty members cite most frequently for delaying retirement. (Note: Respondents were permitted to list multiple factors.)

Want to stay busy and productive	89%
Love the work too much to give it up	64%
Unsure that retirement savings will last	55%
Eager to maximize Social Security	42%
Need to keep health-insurance benefits	42%
Want to maintain institutional ties	41%

"This dramatic trend foretells more than a future of campuses populated by white-haired professors in sensible shoes and tweed jackets with elbow patches," Marcus wrote in *The Hechinger Report*. "It's a big, big problem for universities that are trying to cut costs and improve productivity, making it harder for them to respond to declining enrollments and changing student demand for new kinds of majors, and blocking younger PhDs from entering the workforce."¹¹

Dealing with limited mobility

Some of the challenges can be quantified. A 2004 study by public-health researchers Berhanu Alemayehu and Kenneth Warner found, for example, that employees over the age of 65 incur nearly half of all institutional healthcare expenses.¹² A subsequent analysis by HR consultants Roselyn Feinsod and Thomas Davenport revealed that older employees, on average, rack up medical expenses at a rate 1.4 to 2.2 times greater than that associated with their younger colleagues.¹³

In 2012, a team at the University of Iowa's Department of Health Management and Policy sought to calculate the return on universities' considerable investment in seasoned professors. The conclusion: Faculty productivity, as measured by course loads and publications, "steadily increased until age 40, remained constant between the ages of 40 and 60, but then took a downturn thereafter, with an increasing amount of performance variability among older faculty members."¹⁴

Other consequences of the nation's aging professoriate defy easy measurement, inasmuch as they involve institutional aspirations, ideals, and values.

Flush with long-serving, well-compensated professors, many colleges and universities have limited ability to hire new faculty members, especially tenure-track faculty members, regardless of demand. Institutions are thereby denied an opportunity to calibrate academic priorities, expand course offerings, groom prospective leaders, and diversify faculty ranks that are most likely dominated by white males. (Citing a 2019 report by the American Council of Education, the Association of American Colleges & Universities noted that "positions of power in the academy remain predominately white" and that students are "more likely to encounter people of color in service roles than in faculty or leadership positions."¹⁵)

A prolonged period of little or no turnover can breed institutional stagnation — a serious problem in any field of endeavor but a veritable deal-breaker in higher education, which society rightly holds accountable for producing new knowledge and insights.

Think about it: But for the capacity to change, how could America's colleges and universities satisfy the workforce demands of an increasingly mercurial information economy? Or accommodate scientific breakthroughs, emerging technologies, and constantly changing sociocultural norms? Or convince alumni donors, year after year, that a chronically underperforming athletic team is just *one recruit* away from dynastic greatness?

Neither shy nor retiring

Sylvia Manning, former chancellor of the University of Illinois at Chicago and past president of the Higher Learning Commission, didn't mince words at a 2011 leadership conference organized by the American Council on Education.

"The aging of the professoriate presents a threat to higher education," Manning said. "The product of higher education is knowledge, and knowledge requires renewal. There is no source of knowledge renewal like the power of healthy turnover."¹⁶

Larry Summers, president emeritus of Harvard University, went even further, calling faculty inertia "deeply toxic."¹⁷

At best, the current faculty bottleneck represents a temporary setback for today's newly minted PhDs, who, for the time being, have nowhere to go.

At worst, for that cohort, it could be a *permanent* dream-killer. Kiernan Mathews, director of Harvard University's Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, points out that when the "bubble finally bursts" — in, say, 10 to 20 years — today's would-be rising stars might be shut out yet again. At that point, though, the culprit won't be aging professors who refuse to retire; it'll be younger tenure-track candidates who, because of higher education's traditional bias toward "fresh" doctorates, enjoy a competitive advantage in the hiring process.¹⁸

In the meantime, students are learning from professors who came of age in another era.

Put another way: If there were a "Mindset List" for the faculty cohort in question (as opposed only to incoming college freshmen), creator Beloit College — or Marist University, which inherited the franchise this year — might note that the pertinent individuals entered academia when *Amazon* referred to a river, *AI* stood for associate instructor, and *virtual reality* had yet to become a reality.

Obviously, the specific implications of faculty intransigence vary from institution to institution, from discipline to discipline, and from individual to individual. Almost all of the effects, however, are compounded by — or at least accentuated by — several concurrent, if not competing, sociodemographic forces.

Call it the *not-so-perfect* storm.

Seniors' moment

Three of the biggest complicating factors are intertwined: plateauing enrollments, tightening budgets, and mounting societal expectations (or, more accurately, *demands*).

Not too long ago, Generation Xers and Millennials were spilling out of classrooms, lecture halls, and dormitories, and their tuition dollars (or, in many cases, their *parents'* tuition dollars) were flowing into school coffers. From 1960 to 2010, postsecondary enrollment nationwide grew by nearly 600 percent.¹⁹

The surge in enrollment triggered a dramatic expansion in instructional capacity. Between 1999 and 2017, the number of faculty members employed by degree-granting institutions in the United States jumped by 49 percent — to 1.5 million.²⁰ Although much of the hiring boom involved part-time instructors, full-timers benefited as well. Indeed, from 1976 to 2015, the number of tenure and tenure-track faculty positions nationwide nearly doubled to more than 513,000.²¹

To be clear, the halcyon days of robust matriculation aren't over just yet. Projections call for enrollment to continue to increase by roughly 15 percent a year through 2026.²²

After that, though, high-school graduation rates in much of the country are expected to decline, creating additional financial headwinds for many institutions. The Northeast, which boasts a disproportionate share of the nation's colleges and universities, is expected to take the hardest hit.²³

Although a seismic drop in enrollment is still a few years away, many institutions are experiencing foreshocks. Emerging societal needs and shifting student interests are pushing matriculants toward professional and technical fields (e.g., medicine, engineering, and computer science) and away from once-thriving degree programs in the humanities, the social sciences, and the "hard sciences" — the very programs in which retirement-averse professors tend to be concentrated.

"The bottom line is that many of the nation's colleges and universities will face declining or stagnant student enrollment rates beginning in about six years, a reality which will require a thoughtful, strategic approach to ensure the viability and sustainability of those institutions," Missy Cline wrote in a recent issue of *Higher Ed HR Magazine*.²⁴



No discounting seniors

One recourse long favored by American higher education — hiking tuition and other student fees to cover shortfalls in funding from other sources — might cease to be an option in the near future.

College costs have skyrocketed in recent years, and so have outstanding student-loan liabilities. From 2004 to 2017, student-loan debt ballooned from \$260 billion to \$1.4 trillion and average debt jumped from \$18,650 to \$38,000.²⁵

Recent graduates may carry the heaviest burden, but no age group is exempt. The number of Americans over 60 who have student-loan debt has quadrupled in the past decade — from 700,000 to 2.8 million. Their combined debt, meanwhile, has increased from \$8 billion to \$67 billion.²⁶ The upshot: An alarming number of seniors — *senior citizens*, that is — are having loan payments deducted from their Social Security checks.

Public outrage has prompted numerous politicians to join the fight for both short-term relief and long-term reform.

Any major overhaul of college financing would, of course, require considerable debate and, in all likelihood, significant compromise. Regardless of their wide-ranging agendas, however, most stakeholders agree on one thing: The rubber

band that is student borrowing has been stretched to the breaking point.

Accordingly, unless state and federal governments boost support for postsecondary education, faculty and staff will be directly affected by student enrollment — but *not* in the manner to which they've grown accustomed over the past 50-plus years. Caught between a shirking pool of applicants and a growing backlash against fee increases of any kind, many institutions will find themselves with no choice but to freeze hiring — or, worse still, cut their workforces, starting with nontenured faculty bearing nine-month contracts.

In short, at most of the nation's colleges and universities, fewer students and fewer tuition dollars will translate into fewer faculty positions.

Additionally, because of greater austerity and heightened accountability, much of the public and philanthropic money that is directed toward higher education will come with an unprecedented number of strings attached — more than enough, some might argue, to strangle all but the heartiest recipients.

Funders will want to know, for example, how many freshman matriculants return for year two. Do students end up graduating — and, if so, how quickly do they complete the pertinent requirements? How well do graduates of professional programs perform on licensing exams, and how soon do they land jobs in their chosen fields?

The demands that accompany so-called outcome-based funding will force many institutions to focus first and foremost on measurable student achievement, and the imperative to meet myriad instructional metrics is all but certain to gobble up more of faculty members' finite time and energy. Research and scholarship may well suffer, as may involvement in institutional governance and service in professional organizations.

An age-old (or old-age) question

As if that looming upheaval weren't enough, teaching itself is poised for disruption — and we're not talking about some subtle update of the 1960s caricature that had age-addled professors struggling to figure out the intricacies of the overhead projector.

"Traditional teaching methods, based on the model of faculty as repositories of knowledge, are not as successful with students who view knowledge as freely accessible through the Internet," researchers from New York University's Faculty Resource Network wrote in *Peer Review*, the quarterly journal of the Association of American Colleges & Universities. "There are increased pressures on the faculty to rework their pedagogical strategies for learners whose characteristics include the tendencies to comprehend visually, to shift attention easily, and to expect interaction and collaboration in the classroom."²⁷

Whether the academy's aging professoriate can adapt to such changes is an open question.

Also unanswered: What, if anything, can America's colleges and universities do to break up the senior-faculty logjam and thereby mitigate the headaches outlined above?

The reimposition of a mandatory retirement age is highly unlikely, given the current makeup of Congress — the 116th Congress is among the oldest in the nation's history — and the unrivaled political heft of the Baby Boomer generation.

Don't bet on a major overhaul of the tenure system, either. No college or university wants to be known as the leader of a crusade to scrap policies that were put in place in the late 19th century to protect academic freedom and ensure institutional stability.

Besides, if current trends continue, tenure will eventually die from what could be characterized as "natural causes." Fifty years ago, more than 78 percent of U.S. professors were tenured. Today, in contrast, thanks to an academy-wide shift toward adjuncts, postdocs, clinical professors, lecturers, and other contingent appointees, fewer than 33 percent of faculty members have earned the distinction.²⁸

With few formal (or legal) "sticks" at their disposal, universities across the United States are testing a variety of "carrots" — inducements designed to make retirement less daunting to aging professors.

Offers that can be refused

Some institutions are offering one-time retirement bonuses — buyouts, essentially — that equal what the targeted faculty members would earn in salary over one, two, or even three years of continued employment. Some are creating new titles (and, presumably, commensurate pay scales) for retired professors who give up teaching but remain active in research. Some are making office space and/or laboratory facilities available to retired faculty members who want to maintain a physical presence on campus.

Education Dive recommends "some sort of phaseout" — an approach that "not only staves off the shock of leaving academe cold turkey but also gives universities the benefits of the professors' accumulated knowledge and eases planning for new hires." One possibility floated by the publication: "a 'terminal sabbatical,' in which a professor takes leave, either to do something traditional, such as write a book, or untraditional, such as help revise curriculum, and never returns to campus."²⁹ (The concept seems sound, even if the chosen moniker could use a marketing makeover.)

"Overall," *Education Dive* concluded, "the most successful strategies seem to be those in which both colleges and faculty view retirement as an evolution of the professor's relationship with the school and profession they love, rather than an end to it. Although retirement is still likely to be an emotional time, schools looking to make room for younger faculty — while staying committed to the institutional knowledge and loyalty of faculty who've been around for decades — can find balance."³⁰

Lessons from the past

Those who lose sleep over present circumstances' potential impact on the future of American higher education might derive at least a modicum of solace, if not optimism, from the past. Such individuals will recall that many of the factors and forces that our forebears once viewed as "givens" — inalterable determinants of academia's long-term fortunes — turned out to be no more predictive, or binding, than a college freshman's initial choice of major.

Indeed, despite its reputation for rigidity, American higher education has proved to be incredibly resilient, as evidenced by its too often slow, yet inevitably sure, accommodation of countless belief-altering discoveries and operation-upending technologies — not to mention constantly evolving sociocultural norms.

In light of its track record, we probably shouldn't doubt the academy's capacity to adapt to the challenges ahead — especially if it's given some latitude to determine *how* it will adapt. The ability to navigate uncertainty is, after all, a quality that comes with age and experience, and American higher education has been finding paths forward for close to four centuries now. ■

REFERENCES

- 1 June, Audrey Williams. "Professors Are Graying and Staying, Creating a Faculty Bottleneck." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, The Chronicle of Higher Education, 18 Mar. 2012, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Professors-Are-Graying-and/131226>.
- 2 "Employed Persons by Detailed Occupation and Age." *Labor Force Characteristics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 18 Jan. 2019, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11b.htm>.
- 3 "Rising Faculty Retirement Age." *University Business Magazine*, 6 Feb. 2019, <https://universitybusiness.com/rising-faculty-retirement-age/>.
- 4 "Creating a path forward for reluctant retirees." Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF), https://www.tiaa.org/public/pdf/C21232_Creating_a_path_forward_for_reluctant_retirees_FINAL.pdf.
- 5 "Fidelity Study Finds Older Higher Ed Faculty Confident in Their Retirement Savings, but Few Have Taken Action to Plan Income Strategy." *MarketWatch*, Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC, 9 Oct. 2013, <https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/fidelity-study-finds-older-higher-ed-faculty-confident-in-their-retirement-savings-but-few-have-taken-action-to-plan-income-strategy-2013-10-09>.
- 6 Weinberg, Sharon L., and Marc A. Scott. "The Impact of Uncapping of Mandatory Retirement on Postsecondary Institutions." *Educational Researcher*, vol. 42, no. 6, Aug. 2013, pp. 338-348, doi:10.3102/0013189X13497993.
- 7 Jaschik, Scott. "They Aren't Retiring: A New Study Backs Idea That the End of Mandatory Retirement Significantly Changed the Way Professors Finish (or Don't Finish) Their Careers." *Inside Higher Ed*, 2 Aug. 2013, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/02/new-study-shows-difficulty-encouraging-professors-retire#ixzz2apKxdakx>.
- 8 Flaherty, Colleen. "Working Way Past 65." *Higher Ed News*, American Federation of Teachers New Jersey, AFL-CIO, 17 June 2013, <http://aftnj.org/topics/news/higher-education/2013/working-way-past-65/>.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ghaffarzadegan, Navid, and Ran Xu. "Late Retirement, Early Careers, and the Aging of U.S. Science and Engineering Professors." *PLOS ONE*, Public Library of Science, 26 Dec. 2018, <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article/authors?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0208411>.
- 11 Marcus, Jon. "Aging Faculty Who Won't Leave Thwart Universities' Attempts to Cut Costs." *The Hechinger Report*, 9 Oct. 2015, <https://hechingerreport.org/aging-faculty-who-wont-leave-thwart-universities-attempts-to-cut-costs/>.
- 12 Alemayehu, Berhanu, and Kenneth E. Warner. "The Lifetime Distribution of Health Care Costs." *Wiley Online Library*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111), 4 May 2004, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1475-6773.2004.00248.x>.
- 13 Feinsod, Roselyn, et al. "The Business Case for Workers Age 50 : Planning for Tomorrow's Talent Needs in Today's Competitive Environment." *AARP*, Dec. 2005, https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys_statistics/general/2015/The-Business-Case-for-Workers-Age-50Plus-2005-res-gen.pdf.
- 14 Kaskie, Brian. "The Academy Is Aging in Place: Assessing Alternatives for Modifying Institutions of Higher Education." *The Gerontologist*, The Gerontological Society of America, 2017, Vol. 57, No. 5, 816-823 doi:10.1093/geront/gnw001
- 15 Dedman, Ben. "College Students Are More Diverse Than Ever. Faculty and Administrators Are Not." *AAC&U News*, Association of American Colleges & Universities, 7 Mar. 2019, <https://www.aacu.org/aacu-news/newsletter/2019/march/facts-figures>.
- 16 Manning, Sylvia. "Framing the Discussion: Faculty Retirement and Institutional Response." American Council on Education. July 2011, <http://dooplayer.net/9531600-Advancing-an-agenda-for-excellence.html>.
- 17 Vise, Daniel de. "Larry Summers on Some of Higher Education's 'Bad Ideas.'" *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 11 Nov. 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/college-inc/post/larry-summers-on-some-of-higher-educations-bad-ideas/2011/11/09/gIQAfubCN_blog.html.
- 18 Flaherty, Colleen. "Data Suggest Baby Boomer Faculty Are Putting off Retirement." *#News*, Inside Higher Ed, 17 June 2013, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/06/17/data-suggest-baby-boomer-faculty-are-putting-retirement>.
- 19 "Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions." *The Condition of Education*, National Center for Education Statistics, May 2019, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_csa.asp.
- 20 "Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty." *The Condition of Education - Postsecondary Education - Postsecondary Institutions*, May 2019, National Center for Education Statistics, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_csc.asp.
- 21 Flaherty, Colleen. "About Three-Quarters of All Faculty Positions Are off the Tenure Track, According to a New AAUP Analysis." *#News*, Inside Higher Ed, 12 Oct. 2018, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/10/12/about-three-quarters-all-faculty-positions-are-tenure-track-according-new-aaup>.
- 22 Fox, Justin. "The Coming College Enrollment Bust." *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 30 May 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-05-30/college-enrollment-bust-is-headed-this-way-by-2026>.
- 23 Barshay, Jill. "College Students Predicted to Fall by More than 15% after the Year 2025." *The Hechinger Report*, Teachers College at Columbia University, 10 Sept. 2018, <https://hechingerreport.org/college-students-predicted-to-fall-by-more-than-15-after-the-year-2025/>.
- 24 Kline, Missy. "The Looming Higher Ed Enrollment Cliff." *Higher Ed HR Magazine*, CUPA-HR, 2019, <https://www.cupahr.org/issue/feature/higher-ed-enrollment-cliff/>.
- 25 "Student Loan Resources: Financial Aid & Loan Debt Management." *Debt.org*, <https://www.debt.org/students/>.
- 26 Hersher, Rebecca. "More People Over 60 Are Struggling To Pay Off Student Loans, Report Finds." *NPR*, 17 Jan. 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/01/17/510238206/more-people-over-60-are-struggling-to-pay-off-student-loans-report-finds>.
- 27 Szybinski, Debra, and Trace Jordan. "Navigating the Future of the Professoriate." *Peer Review*, Association of American Colleges & Universities, 29 Dec. 2014, <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/navigating-future-professoriate>.
- 28 Kezar, Adrianna, and Daniel Maxey. "The Changing Academic Workforce." *AGB*, May/June 2013, <https://agb.org/trusteeship-article/the-changing-academic-workforce/>.
- 29 Zarling, Patti. "Easing the Bottleneck of Aging Faculty through Retirement." *Education Dive*, 23 Feb. 2018, <https://www.educationdive.com/news/easing-the-bottleneck-of-aging-faculty-through-retirement/517684/>.
- 30 Ibid.

About Harris Search Associates

Harris Search Associates is a leading global executive search and talent advisory firm. Established in 1997 by Jeffrey G. Harris, the firm focuses on the recruitment of senior leaders to support the growth of the foremost universities, research parks, institutes, national laboratories, academic health centers, hospital enterprises, and organizations driving global innovation and discovery. Based in Dublin, Ohio, a suburb of Columbus, Harris Search Associates maintains regional offices in Dallas and San Francisco. The firm is a shareholder member of IIC Partners, one of the largest global retained executive search organizations, with 47 offices in 32 countries.

About Richard A. Skinner, PhD

Richard A. Skinner is senior consultant at Harris Search Associates. He formerly served as president of Clayton State University in Atlanta and as president and vice chancellor of Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia. Dr. Skinner also was senior vice president for programs at the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. He holds a PhD and a master's degree in Government and International Studies, both from the University of South Carolina.

