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**Abstract**

The paper reports on a study of partners of USA university president/chancellors, a rarely researched population in scholarly literature. Interviews with 24 male and female presidential partners of state supported colleges and universities provided insight into a privileged yet perplexing position, rarely seen by the public. The study draws on the theoretical framework of social role theory and the response of presidential partners to the university's role expectations. Findings reveal often intensely demanding roles, some clear and others more ambiguous suggest that while some of the presidential partners are able to adapt to these role expectations, others find themselves in a struggle. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)