

**THE EXPERIENCES OF SELECT UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTIAL PARTNERS  
WITH TRADITIONAL ROLE EXPECTATIONS**

A Dissertation

by

JUANITA GAMEZ VARGAS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2008

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,  
Committee Members,

Head of Department,

Christine A. Stanley  
Fred Bonner, II  
Joseph O. Jewell  
Yvonna S. Lincoln  
James Scheurich

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**ABSTRACT**

The Experiences of Select University Presidential Partners with Traditional Role  
Expectations. (May 2008)

Juanita Gamez Vargas, B.A., Baylor University;

M.L.I.S., The Catholic University of America

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Christine A. Stanley

This study focused on 24 female and male respondents. The literature on presidential partners was lacking. The literature available was over 20 years out of date, had been conducted by university presidential partners on behalf of national presidential associations, and assumed that the presidential partner was female, White, educated, and upper-class. Contemporary information was limited to trade magazines and newspaper articles. The methodology used was Lincoln and Guba's (1985) naturalistic inquiry paradigm and the framework was role theory according to Biddle and Thomas (1966). The study explored the participant's experience in responding to the university's traditional role expectations and taking into account the intersecting factors of gender, ethnicity, social class, and/or sexual orientation and showed how these factors affected their personal and university work. African Americans, Latinas, Asian Americans, Whites, interracial partnerships, and a same sex partnership were part of the study. The study was significant because it was the first study on presidential partners in over 20 years, the first qualitative research study, and conducted by a non-presidential partner. In addition, the respondent pool was diverse in ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

Significant findings included episodes of racism in the form of death threats and anonymous hate mail; and, discrimination based on the presidential partner's gender, culture, religion, social class and/or sexual orientation. The university's patriarchal role expectations continued to exploit and marginalize the female presidential partner and, to a smaller degree, the male presidential partner. Four primary role expectations were identified that impacted both female and male presidential partners. Findings showed that some of the presidential partners continued to work on their career and their partner's career simultaneously. As a result of the university's patriarchal expectations and the lack of organizational support and recognition of the presidential partner, the female presidential partner stated that their career was essential for financial security. Numerous recommendations for practice and further research were reported. These findings will contribute to the research fields in higher education administration, organizational structures, social constructivism, sociology, woman studies, male studies, GLBT issues, mental health, marriage and family, psychology and other fields of knowledge.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Dr. Robert W. Vargas and my son, Joaquin Diego Vargas. Without Bob I would not have had the opportunity to quit a successful career and start graduate school. He asked about my dreams and has tried to make them all come true.

I hope Joaquin looks back at this experience as an inspiration for earning an education and understands what a rare opportunity to have had his dad be his “Mr. Mom,” too.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Second, I wanted to acknowledge the staff in the department of Educational Administration and Human Resources in the College of Education, especially Joyce Nelson and Bill Ashworth, who watched my back and saved my neck. Without their assistance, my experience as a graduate student would have been worse.

Next, I wish to thank my parents, Nicolas Benavidez Gamez and Guadalupe Lopez Gamez. While I was at Catholic U, Mom would send me care packages from Texas (one time it was a side of beef), and when I started this process, Dad couldn't believe I quit my job for "another degree". They have always been proud of me, but they would have preferred that I had attended the University of Texas at Austin.

Next, I want to acknowledge Sarah Agnes Lopez, my aunt, whom I miss everyday. In spite of a horrific father who didn't believe in educating women, Aunt Sarah had a great personality and successful business. Aunt Sarah was always proud of me. I could do no wrong.

I wish to recognize my mentors during the turbulent 1970s, those rare liberal Catholic priests, Very Rev. Donald Chatham (who encouraged me to attend law school) and Fr. Vaughn Meiller (who encouraged me to get the hell away from a small town). I wish they were alive to enjoy this occasion.

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I also want to thank the university presidential partners I met during the research process. I appreciate their candor and their hospitality. I admire their immense love, protectiveness, and support for their soul mates. I feel privileged to have met them and entered their world for a glimpse into that "fishbowl."

I wish to thank Becky Gates, presidential partner, who shared her zest for life with me and gave me access to opportunities I never thought possible. She is the strength behind Robert Gates, former President of Texas A&M University and currently U. S. Secretary of Defense.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to First Lady Janice Herber Beran, university presidential partner, whose university work is an inspiration for those who want to make a difference and who was the catalyst for this dissertation.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

*The news came unexpectedly one early afternoon. “He’s accepted the presidency,” she exclaimed and her world as she knew it changed. She was entering an elite population known as university presidential partners. She wondered aloud. What did the university expect her to do as the presidential partner? Were there certain expectations? How was she supposed to behave and what kind of changes would she have to plan for in this new role? Would she be able to maintain her career? The interviewing committee had not said a word to her partner about her role as the First Lady and he forgot to ask. I teased her that she already knew how to pour tea, what else did she need to know. After we chuckled, I reassured her that I would help her look up such information. It did not take me long to find out that little information was available to answer her questions. My friend began the packing process and I did not hear from her for several months.*

---

This dissertation follows the style of the *Journal of Higher Education*.

This was my introduction to the elite world of university presidential partners. During our break in communication I wondered how my friend was adapting. She had been a career professional and single mother for years before she met her soul mate. As part of a dual career family she had developed into a nation-wide authoritative figure in her discipline. I later heard that she had quit her job and was a full-time presidential partner working with her partner focusing on the university's visionary goals. Later I spoke with her and she mentioned how much she had wanted a manual for guidance and suggestions about her role and responsibilities as the university presidential partner.

These discussions made me wonder what kinds of adaptations she had undergone. What happens to a career professional when they leave one established life and enter a totally different environment? How does she continue to utilize her education, management experience, and interpersonal skills? What personal challenges does she experience in balancing her role and identity as the university presidential partner?

How do career professional women adapt their career and personal roles to accommodate an organizational patriarchy such as higher education? Does the university expect the career professional to quit her job and be a full-time university presidential partner?

What happens to the dual career couple when the woman becomes the university president? How do their partners adapt to the role of the presidential partner? Does the university's expectation of the president's partner differ for men than for women? Does

the university expect the partner to entertain, assist with fundraising, and attend athletic events? Who takes care of the presidential house?

Then my mind immediately began to wonder about numerous identities and intersections of identity. Are there different or similar experiences for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals? Are there different or similar experiences for ethnically diverse presidential partners? Are there racially based role expectations or assumptions if the president's partner is Latino, Asian or an African American male? These questions surrounding my friend and other presidential partners were the motivating force behind choosing this topic for my dissertation study.

To begin researching the leadership experiences and role expectations of presidential partners I needed to explore the literature on the history of the presidential partner and its evolution into today's status and role expectations.

### *University Presidential Partners*

The university president has traditionally been an upper-middle class male, White, heterosexual, and married to an upper-middle class educated White female (Corbally, 1977; Ostar, 1983). There is virtually no literature on African American, Asian, Latino, or same-sex presidential partners.

Nevertheless, the traditional president has been the leader for the university whereas his partner has been an invisible leader in maintaining the presidential house; serving as a representative of the university on various committees on campus and in the

community; entertaining faculty, staff, and students; and, assisting the president with fundraising (Corbally, 1977).

However, university leadership has slowly been changing. In the last 40 years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the woman's movement, and affirmative action efforts, some of the traditionally White presidential partnerships have retired and have been replaced by a diverse population based on gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation (Heimer, 1987; Justice, 1990; Huang, 1999; Cotton, 2003).

These changes in leadership have impacted the diversity of the presidential partner. The new diverse presidential partners may (a) be female or male, (b) have or had a professional career, (c) have children still at home, and/or (d) be a caregiver for elderly relatives. These new "non-traditional" presidential partners may have adapted their dual career lives before becoming a presidential family and may have lived with a different set of role expectations. However, the role expectations of presidential partners have remained for the most part quite traditional (Riesman, 1982; Longwood University, 2006).

Some of today's university presidents are married, single, openly gay, or in a long-term relationship. Some of the university presidential partners use the term "First Lady," "First Gent," presidential partner, or presidential wife/partner, or partner. This menagerie of titles has resulted in a majority of partners or partners preferring the title of "presidential partner" (NASULGC, 2001; Longwood University, 2006). The term presidential "partner" will be used henceforth.

While some of these presidential partners enjoyed and preferred to conduct the traditional university role and responsibilities, other presidential partners chose to deviate from traditional roles and developed their own role to benefit their partner, maintained their professional career, and utilized their education, knowledge and skills (Morris, 1998; Smith, 2001; Oden, 2004; Pratt, 2004).

### *Statement of the Problem*

A robust university reflects the quality and dedication of key personnel from state officials, regents, faculty, administration, and staff. The president with input from the faculty, staff, and students develops the university's educational visions and goals. One invisible contributor to the university's success in meeting its vision and goals has been the university president's partner. The university presidential partner has been an unofficial key member within educational institutions for many generations (Corbally, 1977; Riesman, 1982; Ostar, 1983; 1986).

Traditional presidential partners supported the university by maintaining the presidential home; entertaining faculty, students, alumni, and official guests; assisting the president on fundraising activities; representing the university and the president at campus activities and in the community, and a variety of other activities on behalf of the institution (Corbally, 1977; Riesman, 1982; Ostar, 1983).

A comprehensive review of the literature reveals that the traditional university partner as a White, middle to upper class female with a college education who rarely

received formal recognition by the university and was rarely compensated for her work serving as the goodwill ambassador for the institution (Corbally, 1977; Ostar, 1983; Morris, 1998; Huang, 1999; Cotton, 2003). Unfortunately, the literature review conducted did not identify scholarly research on Historically African American colleges and universities (HBCUs) presidential partners, presidential partners at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and/or presidential partners who were gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT).

Information identifying the gradual changes in the university presidential partner's role expectations was found in non-scholarly resources. Most information was found in national president's association websites and the association's documents, and education oriented magazines, and newspapers such as the Association of American Universities (AAU), National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Advocate*, and *The New York Times*. Although there were scattered and inconsistent sources of data available on the approximate number of university presidents and their gender, there were no comprehensive data on their marital status, partner information and the couple's career biographies. Therefore, published peer-reviewed resources and data on presidential partners and their role expectations were noticeably absent.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to identify how contemporary university presidential partner has adapted to the university's traditional role expectations. There was a major gap in the current literature about this particular topic. This study first described the selection of respondents, identified the research framework, and the research methodology; second, identified the presidential partner's responses to the university's role expectations; and third, described any themes, patterns, or other research findings.

The findings in this study were preceded by the following assumptions:

1. The researcher will be impartial and objective in the analysis of data and narrative.
2. The directory information and data published by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), Association of American Universities (AAU), American Council on Education (ACE), Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), and the National Association of State and University Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) is current and accurate.
3. The methodology proposed and described offers the most logical and appropriate design for this particular research project.
4. The respondents in this study will be candid and objective in their perceptions as the university presidential partner.

### *Research Questions*

The overarching questions that guided this study was how the university's traditional role expectations affected the university presidential partners:

1. What are the traditional role expectations that presidential partners are expected to perform?
2. How are the university presidential partners influenced to perform the University's traditional role expectations?
3. How does the university presidential partner perceive their ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation affecting their performance of their role expectations?
4. How does the university presidential partner perceive social class affecting their role?
5. How does positionality relate to the university presidential partners role expectations?
6. How have universities changed their support for the presidential partners?

### *Definition of Terms*

The findings of this study are to be reviewed within the context of the following definitions of operational terminology.

1. *Asian*: "...any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the

Indian subcontinents including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam” (Rosenblum & Travis, 2000, p.10).

2. *Board of Regents*: A committee of university officers who have general supervision over the welfare and conduct of students. This committee has different identifiers based on college history or legislation. The term “Regents” will be used when referring to the university’s Board of Regents, Board of Visitors, or Board of Trustees.
3. *Culture*: Refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.
4. *Demographic variables*: Variables to be studied that will consist of the Presidential partner’s ethnicity, phenotype (skin color), education, gender, sexual orientation, professional occupation, number of institutions as a presidential partner.
5. *Ethnic group*: Composed of people with a shared national origin or ancestry and shared characteristics such as language (Rosenblum & Travis, 2000, p.1). For the purposes of this study, ethnic groups will be identified as African American, Asian, Latina/o, American Indian, or White.
6. *Fishbowl*: A state of affairs where you have no privacy. The presidential

partners referred to their life as living in a fishbowl.

7. *Gender*: Masculinity and femininity; the acting out of the behaviors thought to be appropriate for a particular sex (Rosenblum & Travis, 2000, p.1).
8. *GLBT*: Abbreviation for Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, and Transgender.
9. *Institutions of higher education*: An institution for higher learning with teaching and research facilities constituting a graduate school and professional schools that award master's degrees and doctorates and an undergraduate division that awards bachelor's degrees; also known as university or college.
10. *Non-traditional presidential partner*: Female or male partner of a university president who has or has had a professional career. The presidential partner takes an active role on behalf of the university and community. The term also refers to presidential partners who were non-White female, ethnic minorities, male, and GLBT.
11. *Presidential partner*: Partner of an academic chief executive. Additional titles used are First Lady, First Gent, First Gentleman, Associate to the President, presidential partner, presidential wife/husband, presidential partner, wife/husband of the president, and spouse of the president (Oden, 2004; Longwood University, 2006).
12. *Race*: A local geographic or global human population distinguished as a more or less distinct group by genetically transmitted physical characteristics (American Heritage Dictionary). The conception that people can be classified

into coherent groups based on skin color, hair texture, shape of head, eyes, nose, and lips (Rosenblum & Travis, 2000, p.1).

13. *Sexual orientation*: The direction of one's sexual interest toward members of the same, opposite, or both sexes, especially a direction dictated by physiologic rather than sociologic forces (The American Heritage® Stedman's Medical Dictionary, 2nd Edition, 2004).
14. *Social class*: Refers to social groups arising from interdependent economic relationships among people (Krieger, 2001, p. 693). Term refers to socio-economic class ranking of people into a hierarchy within a culture. At times, it can be related to elitism. Those in a higher class are known as a social elite.
15. *Traditional presidential partner activities*: Cultured institutional activities that have historically been performed by presidential partners. Some examples of these activities include fundraising events and banquets; conducting tours of the presidential house; entertaining faculty, staff, students, and college guests; serving on university campus committees; attending groundbreaking ceremonies and graduations, and other activities on behalf of the university. (Corbally, 1977)
16. *University*: An institution of higher education and research, which grants academic degrees. The term “university” and “college” will be used interchangeably throughout this study.
17. *University role expectations*: Refers to the expected behavior and

performance of activities by the presidential partner. The descriptions of these role expectations can be found under “Traditional presidential partner activities” in this section.

18. *University work*: General term used by presidential partners identifying the performance of the university’s traditional role expectations. It is not specific to particular activities.

### *Significance of this Study*

This qualitative study was significant because it added to the research on the experiences of university presidential partners, which was particularly lacking in the fields of higher education administration, gender studies, and women’s issues. What research exists was outdated. Qualitative research conducted exclusively by a presidential partner on behalf of their partner’s national presidents’ association, focused on White females, and was designed to perpetuate the university’s traditional role expectations under the guise of annual conference programming and workshop training (Corbally, 1977; Riesman, 1982; Ostar, 1983; Vaughan, 1987).

What little contemporary information that existed on university presidential partners was available in non-scholarly publications and college websites (Heidelberg College, 1995; Chance-Reay, 1999; Huang, 1999; Oden, 2004; Longwood University, 2006). No scholarly research had been identified that examined the contributions or role expectations of any ethnic minority or GLBT university presidential partners.

From a pragmatic perspective, this study was significant because the research findings provided information that could be utilized for contract negotiation for the presidential partner during the presidential search interviewing process. Research findings provided information for upwardly mobile faculty and administrators about the institution's cultural environment and its impact on the presidential partner. Research findings could be utilized to implement changes to the institutional policy on compensating, recognizing, and rewarding the contributions of the presidential partner.

Finally, the research study was significant because it was conducted as a qualitative research study with female and male presidential partners and a diversity of ethnic minorities (African American, Asian and Latino). The research data gathered demonstrated the changes that some universities were undertaking for the presidential partnership and the adaptations presidential partners were experiencing based on the presidential partner's ethnicity, gender, social class, positionality, and sexual orientation.

### *Contents of This Study*

This study is divided into five chapters. *Chapter I* presents an overview of the problem, assumptions, research questions, definition of terms, and the significance of this study. *Chapter II* contains a review of the literature encompassing historical and contemporary university presidential partners, the theoretical framework utilized for this study, other similar types of patriarchal and organizational supportive partners, and the complexity of role expectations in relation to the university presidential partner's

ethnicity, class, gender, positionality, and sexual orientation. *Chapter III* outlines the procedural process and methodology for this study. *Chapter IV* reports on the analyses and presentation of the research findings based on the data collection taken from presidential partners and their university environments. *Chapter V* concludes with a summary of this research study's findings, presents conclusions reached by the researcher, and provides implications and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The President's Partner

To be a presidential partner  
Must be a grand life  
Late in bed  
Tea in the afternoon  
Surrounded by servants  
At my beck and call

I awake from my dream  
I rush to dress for the day  
Two meetings, one luncheon  
An afternoon seminar  
A dinner engagement  
Only three speeches today

At home checking e-mail  
I reach for the cell  
He'll be late again  
Of course I'll attend for him  
Another speech, something short  
Smile, shake hands, greet

She says to me  
To be a presidential wife  
Must be a grand life  
Late in bed  
Tea in the afternoon  
Servants at my beck and call

Juanita Gamez Vargas

Based upon my personal knowledge of the female presidential partner mentioned in *Chapter I*, who had a professional career and decided to be a full-time presidential partner, I thought it was highly probable that other university presidential partners decided on a similar path. Their successful achievements as the presidential partner could have been affected by various intersecting factors (e.g. positionality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) with the university's role expectations of the presidential partner.

The literature review was structured by introducing a historical retrospective on the traditional university presidential partner, contemporary non-traditional presidential partners, community college presidential partners, and briefly referring to other marginalized individuals such as female partners of preachers, ambassadors, and corporate executives. The literature review explored potential factors that could have affected their experiences based on (a) university patriarchal culture, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity, (d) social class, (e) positionality, and (f) sexual orientation.

Finally the literature review will discuss the theoretical framework of role theory and how it will guide the research.

### *History of the University Presidential Partner*

#### *The Traditional Presidential Partner*

The research literature did not recognize the university presidential wife until the late 1970s. Corbally (1977), a university presidential partner, conducted the first

quantitative research survey of university presidential partners. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), a president's national association, sponsored the empirical study to assess the types of activities conducted by the presidential partners, level of support for these activities, and amount of time they spent in conducting these duties (Corbally, 1977).

Presidential partners came by their position in the traditional way, through their marriage with the president. They were not asked but it was assumed that they would not work outside the home, would balance family life with college activities, maintain the presidential house, as well as ensure the president was content at home so he could function well at his job (Corbally, 1977). Some of the presidential partners surveyed knew that the role expectations by the institution were based on previous presidential partners and historical tradition and most of the women did not think these role expectations would change. In addition, some partners voiced weariness of the demanding expectations placed upon them by the university and community. There were others who saw their husband's success, as their success and therefore did not need recognition or compensation.

Many first time presidential partners expressed concern about their public appearances and behavior and 38 % of the partners surveyed advised the first time presidential partner to "be yourself" (Corbally, 1977, p. 143). Corbally (1977) had a reaction to this advice.

While the respondents are urging you to be yourself, they are also suggesting that you should have good health, abundant energy, emotional stability, and organizational ability. They are also assuming that the 'real you' is tactful,

discreet, tasteful, sensible, gracious, unflappable, flexible, gregarious, and immune to criticism of yourselves, your husbands, and your children...They are actually saying that you should be yourself within some obvious guidelines of appropriate behavior...They are assuming that you have a sense of propriety, are unselfish, thoughtful, and generous, possess many social skills, and love entertaining people in groups, large and small. (Corbally, 1977, p. 144)

Corbally (1977) advised presidential partners to be careful when moving into a new community and not change any activities traditionally performed by the previous presidential partner until they had had time to meet key people on and off campus, and learn about campus culture and the community. Presidential partners were reminded that their actions, comments, appearance, and demeanor were a reflection and extension of their husband and the university; therefore, the presidential couple decided what activities to pursue (Corbally 1977).

It is difficult to be yourself while living in the public eye, in a house you have not chosen, spending money which is not yours, spending your time on activities others have selected for you, with a lifestyle which might be quite contrary to your own inclination. (Corbally, 1977, p. 145)

#### *Contemporary Non-Traditional Partners*

Six years later two surveys were conducted. The American Association of State Colleges (AASCU), a national presidents' association, funded a survey of its presidential partner membership. Ostar, a presidential partner, conducted the survey. Another national president' associations, the National Association of State and University Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), funded the second survey. Two presidential partners, Clodius and Magrath (1984), conducted the survey.

Both surveys were nearly identical to Corbally's survey and were designed to elicit information from the presidential partners for planning the annual conference programming agendas. Presidential partners were asked to identify and verify role expectations of the presidential partner and to identify any concerns and issues.

Roberta Ostar (1983) was a presidential wife and chair of the AASCU presidential partner programming committee when she conducted the study. The survey identified the traditional role expectations of a female presidential partner such as maintaining the presidential home; entertaining faculty, students, and alumni; accompanying the president on fundraising events; and, serving as the spokesperson for the university on campus and in the community with committees and speaking engagements.

A significant research finding was the personal cost to the presidential wife in maintaining the traditional role. Although the partners understood the necessity of performing these traditional duties, they voiced a concern about their lack of self-confidence and self-identity; frustration about being treated as an ancillary; and, the lack of official recognition and compensation by the university for all their work. The research findings were used for developing a handbook for association members and subsequently, programming ideas (Ostar, 1984).

NASULGC sponsored a presidential partner survey that was designed and conducted by Clodius and Magrath, both of whom were NASULGC presidential partners. The survey's intent was to update the Corbally survey and identify

...improved working relationships among the partner, president, board members, and other constituents...that, as

a group, campus partners hold unique and privileged positions of influence that can have direct bearing on the campuses and the communities they serve. (Clodius & Magrath, 1984, p. 13)

The survey respondents were White females 40 to 60 years of age, over 85 % had a bachelor's degree, and 11 % had an earned doctorate (Clodius & Magrath, 1984, p. 19). The study began to reveal the emerging non-traditional presidential partner and their conflict with the university's traditional role expectations. Forty-two percent of the partners surveyed had had a professional career before becoming a presidential partner and 58 % of those partners continued to work professionally after their husbands became presidents (Clodius & Magrath, 1984, p. 20).

The presidential partners who continued to work professionally found themselves exhausted trying to manage both careers, that of their chosen profession and of being a presidential partner. Those who chose to quit their professional work did so because "Trustees said no! My duties were too numerous" or the combination of professional work and college responsibilities were too much on them physically and mentally. As one partner commented, "I'm not a super human..." (Clodius and Magrath, 1984, p. 21).

One similarity found among these studies was the hardship and lack of recognition of being a presidential partner (Corbally, 1977; Ostar, 1983; Clodius & Magrath, 1984). A presidential partner had this to say about her role.

...I do deeply believe that this is one of the least understood and least valued roles in American culture today. Yet the time and effort given by most partners is astonishing in its magnitude. And the price each of us pays in our own individual ways, through poor health, strained family relationships, loss of friendships and career, is often great. (Clodius & Magrath, 1984, p. 22)

Another observation was that the presidential partners were “beginning to assert themselves in areas of their own careers, possible remuneration, and the expectations of their role” (Clodius and Magrath, 1984, p. 22). This observation signaled a change in attitudes from some of the presidential partners.

Non-traditional university presidential partnerships began emerging in the 1980s, after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the woman’s movement, and affirmative action hiring efforts (MacKinnon, 1989; Hochschild, 2003a; Hochschild, 2003b; Trebon & Trebon, 2004; Coontz, 2005). The new university presidents were diverse based on their gender, ethnicity, social class, marital status, and sexual orientation (Heimer, 1987; Huang, 1999, Justice, 1990; Cotton, 2003; Trebon & Trebon, 2004, Fain, 2007a).

Even the title of “presidential wife” was changing. Although some partners have used the term “First Lady,” “First Gent,” presidential partner, or presidential wife/husband, most women and men preferred the title of “presidential partner” (Kintzer, 1972; Corbally, 1977; Longwood University; NASULGC, 2005).

Whereas some of the presidential partners preferred to continue with the university’s traditional role expectations, other presidential partners chose to deviate from the norm and develop a distinct role to benefit the university, their partner, and as a strategy to maintain their career and use their education, knowledge and skills (Smith, 2001; Pratt, 2004).

What some female presidential partners soon discovered was that they could continue with their professional career; however, they had to continue to perform the

traditional wife's role expectations of fundraising, entertaining, taking care of the Presidential house, being the primary caregiver for the children, and attending college-related events (Clodius & Magrath, 1984; Hochschild, 2003a; Hochschild, 2003b; Trebon & Trebon, 2004; Coontz, 2005).

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges and the American Council of Education sponsored Ostar (1991) to conduct the last known nationwide survey on presidential partners. Ostar (1991) had conducted previous surveys for AASCU with university presidential partners and this new survey was combining university and community college presidential partners.

The survey's focus was to explore the challenges and experiences of the presidential partners. The findings included examples of the personal life of the presidential family, extensive levels of entertaining and hosting on behalf of the college, the lack of privacy and its effects on the family and the university's expectations of the presidential partner. Over 82% of the presidential partners, regardless of gender and professional career, were expected to volunteer for the institution (p. x).

One major observation from the Ostar survey was the university's expectation that the presidential partner would be responsible for entertaining, hosting, and fundraising. Even within a presidential marriage the male presidential partner did not assume responsibilities for entertaining. Here was an example of a university's expectation of its female presidents.

I use the house for a community resource, for making friends for the school. But until people realize that a woman president has no more time than a man president to

cook, to clean, and so forth, there's still a problem of who will do this part of the role. (Ostar, 1991, p. 1)

The importance of the passage above demonstrates that the university's traditional role expectations from a female presidential partner carried over to its patriarchal expectations of a female president running a university and making decorating, hosting, and entertaining decisions. The passage signaled a time for change in the university's role expectations.

Ostar (1991) had two recommendations for university governing boards and trustees to consider for their presidents and their families.

- Recognize: Tell the presidential partner privately and publicly how much his or her contributions mean.
- Compensate: Support the presidential partner who volunteers for the institution with staff help, tuition remission, retirement annuity, or a title. (p. x)

The recommendations to recognize and compensate signals the first time that recommendations were directed to the university to recognize and reward the contributions of the presidential partners who worked in behalf of the university (Ostar 1983; Ostar 1986; Ostar 1991). As I conducted my research I observed whether any of the universities had implemented the suggestions of formally recognizing and rewarding the presidential partners and if so, in what manner.

#### *Community College Presidential Partners*

In the early 1970s a guidebook was written for female community college presidential partners on their role expectations (Kintzer, 1972). Although there were 148 female community college presidents in 1975 (Smith, 2001, p. 227), I assumed some

were married at the time. Kintzer's (1972) handbook was written for female community college presidential partners because of her extensive use of the female pronouns and emphasis on stereotypical activities such as decorating, menu selection, and entertaining.

The handbook was written for presidential partners at a time when community colleges were being established in urban and rural communities and these new presidential partners were unsure of their roles. Kintzer (1972) realized when she became a presidential partner that there were no training manuals, handbooks, and resources to help prepare presidential partners of their impending responsibilities. Kintzer's advice to presidential partners was to know the community, learn what the board of trustees expected of them, meet the faculty, and be a good hostess. Kintzer emphasized that to be successful the presidential partner needed to develop time management, scheduling, interpersonal, communication, and organizational skills. In addition, Kintzer (1972) stressed to "be gracious; be discreet" in their role as the presidential partner (p. 54).

The next study on community college presidential partners was 14 years later. Vaughn (1986) conducted a mixed methods research study with community college presidents and part of the report set aside a chapter on the presidential partner. Vaughn had been a community college president and was associated with AASCU when he conducted the study.

The community college presidential partners were quite different from their university counterparts in education levels, employment status, and marital status. Vaughn (1986) identified the community college presidential partner as a White female

with the average age of 48, ranging from 26 to 74 years in age. While 77 % of the male community college presidents had doctorates the education level of their partners ranged from 20% high school graduates to 4 % with an earned doctorate and the majority of 33 % having a bachelor's degree (p. 144).

Forty-three percent of the community college presidential partners worked full-time and 24 % worked part-time outside the home (Vaughn, 1986, p. 144). There were two male presidential partners in the survey however; no demographic information on the males was provided (Vaughn, 1986, p. 153).

Vaughn (1986) identified a high number of divorces among community college presidential partnerships because “their partner ha [d] not grown with them.” There were also fewer dual career conflicts because the presidential partner typically had less education (pp. 146-147).

Vaughn (1986) stated that the majority of community college presidents came from a blue-collar home where the mother did not conflict with the father over his “career mobility.” Therefore, Vaughn (1986) surmised that their blue-collar upbringing “may have influenced the male presidents in their choice of partners and their attitude toward professional competition between partners” (p.147).

The range of role expectations varied at the community colleges from no traditional role expectations by the Trustees to similar university role expectations such as entertaining, being supportive of the president, and projecting a positive public image (Vaughn, 1986, pp. 150-151). A major difference between community colleges and universities was the funding support for the presidential family. Community colleges

rarely provided presidential houses and instead offered housing allowances. The community college support for the presidential partner was significantly less than for the university presidential partner. The community college provided little personnel assistance for entertaining, hosting, fund-raising, and community involvement. It expected the presidential partner to handle those responsibilities without any financial or personnel assistance. Discretion, graciousness, a disciplined work ethic, entertaining and other traditionally female role expectations were considered appropriate advice for women during Kintzer and Vaughn's era but not so for the male community college presidential partners.

Smith (2001) conducted a nation-wide survey, which included 21 male community college presidential partners. Smith was a married community college president at the time of the study. Smith (2001) stated that her male survey respondents were older than the women who had participated in Vaughn's study (Smith, 2001, p. 228). Several of the men either were close to retirement age or had retired at the time their partner became community college presidents.

Smith (2001) stated that some of the new community college presidential partnerships were in their second marriage; the male presidential partners' previous professional careers were in academia or in private industry and were not interested in performing the traditional support roles (p. 229-230). Over 89 % of the male presidential partners were employed in full-time positions and three out of the eight retired husbands had part-time jobs (Smith, 2001, p. 229).

The male community college presidential partners identified their primary responsibility as supporting their partners, acting as a host and escort, and attending some college functions. Not all male presidential partners enjoyed being an escort for their partner. One female president provided the following comment.

My divorce was largely caused by becoming a president.  
My ex-husband had difficulty being as he described it, a  
'consort.' (Smith, 2001, p. 230)

Over 41 % stated that they had no role at all and one partner stated that his only role was to "keep a clean profile" (Smith, 2001, p.230). All male presidential partners emphasized their focus on supporting their partner and enjoyed seeing her happy and successful (Smith, 2001).

#### *Similar Traditional Supportive Partners*

Three other types of female partners demonstrated similar role expectations within patriarchal institutions. They were the female partner of preachers, ambassadors, and corporate executives.

*Preacher's Partner.* The preacher's partner had similar issues of the institution (church) expecting the partner to be there to support her husband without receiving compensation or recognition (Truman, 1974; M. I. H. Ritter, 1981; Zoba, 1997).

Historically, some of the earliest colleges and universities were founded and administered by ministers and their partners and that may explain how the same traditional expectations came to exist in universities (Clodius & Magrath, 1984; Lucas, 1994; Chance-Reay, 1999). The similarities between the preacher's partner and university presidential partners' personal and mental health responses to the role

expectations were almost identical, with issues of loneliness, isolation, lack of self-worth, and role expectations by the parish and parishioners (M. I. H. Ritter, 1981; Clodius & Magrath, 1984; Zoba, 1997; Brackin, 2001; King, 2003).

*Ambassador's Wife.* Another partner identified with similar traditional role expectations of the presidential partner was the ambassador's partner. Hochschild (1969) conducted an exploratory study on the various roles of a United States ambassador's wife and what was constructed as a stress free role was similar to the daily pressures of the female university presidential partner. For example, the ambassador's wife had to be well versed on diplomatic protocol and etiquette, understand her role as a representative for the nation, careful in developing relationships with anyone, aware of the political nature of her role, and aware that her behavior could affect her husband's work as the U.S. ambassador and his life-long diplomatic career. The ambassador's wife recognition for a job well done was the success of her husband's work. Hochschild (1969) considered the role of an ambassador's wife similar to a corporation executive wife such that it "is not formally in the organizational culture but is nevertheless covered by its bureaucratic ranks" (p. 82).

*Corporate Executive Wife.* The corporate executive wife's role was to support her husband and informally represent him and the corporation. Kanter (1977) and Cullerton-Felker (1986) observed that corporate partner were not recognized in organizational charts; they were expected to host company executives and their clients; volunteer for prominent socially elitist charities on behalf of the corporation; present a

socially elitist lifestyle with their husband and family; and were not compensated or formally recognized for their contributions of service.

### *Intersecting Factors*

The review of the literature reflected a lack of extensive research on the non-traditional university presidential partner's perception of their role expectations. Research was severely lacking about whether these experiences differed based on the university's patriarchal culture, or the partner's gender, race, ethnicity, social class status, positionality, and/or sexual orientation.

#### *University Patriarchal Culture: Past*

The lack of recognition for women's contributions from a patriarchal university culture was not new. Institutional exploitation based on gender and/or ethnicity, obstacles in the tenure process, sexual harassment, and inequality in salary and promotion continued to marginalize women and women of color at all institutional levels; administrative, faculty, and staff. Reports abound on the double standard that existed between women and men in academic and private industry including the university's reluctance to employ career faculty couples (Acker & Piper, 1984; Acker & Feuerverger, 1996; Fletcher, 1998; Conway, 2001; Martin, 2001; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001; Turner, 2002; Bell, Meyerson, Nkomo, Scully, 2003; Alfred, 2004; Torres, 2006).

Chance-Reay (1999) constructed a chronological biographical account from the historical archives at Kansas State University of its former First Ladies. The biographies illustrated how early land-grant university presidential partners had initially been preacher's partners. These female presidential partners were expected by the university and the community to support their partners. While the president was traveling across the country to raise funds for the college, the presidential partner was expected to provide the university students (traditionally male) with food, clothing, and even temporary shelter.

Chance-Reay (1999) described that in some cases when a university was financially strapped for funds, presidential partners used their own separate personal funds to prevent the college from closing. Regardless of the presidential partners' personal and financial contributions, no formal recognition or restitution was ever made by the institution.

#### *University Patriarchal Culture: Present*

There were various research articles that described the history of the university patriarchal culture and its effect on university faculty women. However, no research was identified during the literature review that provided evidence of the institutional patriarchal culture's tangible influence on the role expectations of university presidential partners.

During the interviews with female presidential partners' three documents that had been created specifically for female presidential partners were obtained. These

documents emphasized the traditional role expectations of university presidential partners.

The first document was an AASCU pamphlet entitled *First Year Partner on the University Campus* (Appleberry, 1992). The other document was a manual that was provided to all new presidential partnerships affiliated with NASULGC, *Insights: A guide for presidents' and chancellors' partners (Edited and Revised 2001)*. The final document was a draft copy of a job description, *Presidential Partner/Associate of the President* (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n. d.) that had been prepared sometime during the 1990s.

All three resources provided guidance in understanding the demands of being a presidential family. Appleberry (1991) provided the following advice.

...The decisions your partner makes in his or her tenure on campus has consequences for the entire community, and cause a high level of interest and attention in both the university and local community...In the past many partners chose to be part of a “2 fer” team—two for the price of one.  
(p.1)

Appleberry (1991) provided helpful suggestions of what to expect as the presidential partner and advised the partner to determine what roles and duties they may wish to perform. The pamphlet was categorized into (a) Introduction, (b) You the Partner, (c) Enabling skills to assist you in your role as partner, (d) The big move, (e) Community Welcome, (f) Managing the house, (g) Hints for taking charge of the home, (h) Entertaining: Fund and friend raising, (i) The schedule, (j) The children, (k) Getting to know the governing board, (l) Advice to the President: how to help your partner, and (m) As the years pass.

The next document was produced by NASULGC as a training manual, *Insights: A guide for presidents' and chancellors' partners (Edited and Revised 2001)*. This manual was made available to all first time presidential families affiliated with NASULGC. During my interviewing sessions, other presidential partners not affiliated with NASULGC expressed interest in seeing the manual. However when I mentioned it to some NASULGC presidential partner members many were unaware of its existence or had not realized that it had been updated.

The NASULGC manual is divided into chapters; (a) Personal challenges, (b) Dealing with the media, (c) The House, (d) Town and gown, (e) Tricks of the trade, (f) Staffing, (g) Entertaining, (h) On the road, (i) Development, and (j) Financial.

The following example from the manual advocated the traditional viewpoint.

Whenever the president is female, the university can always hire a staff member to perform certain activities associated with the presidency. However, if the president is a married male, the conventional view is that his partner can do everything as 'part of the job.' (NASULGC, 2001, p. 9)

The final document, *Presidential Partner/Associate of the President* (see Appendix A.), illustrated how the role expectations were developed by the institutional patriarchal culture in the form of a job description. A former presidential couple, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, (n.d.), created a job description for the presidential partner on behalf of AASCU.

The Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (n.d.) job description served as a template for other universities and presidential partnerships. It was unknown how extensive the distribution of this job description had been to the AASCU membership and university

systems. Two of the female survey respondents referred to the Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick presidential partner job description during this study.

These three documents reaffirmed the role expectations traditionally associated with female presidential partners. The NASULGC manual *Insights* specifically stated that the university did not expect a male presidential partner to assume these role expectations. In fact, upon closer examination of the documents it was clear that the materials had been written with a traditional heterosexual couple with family in mind and not the male presidential partner or same sex presidential couple. Therefore these documents were indicative of the university's patriarchal culture.

#### *Gender*

Male presidential partners shared some similarities with some female presidential partners as far as having a professional career and being supportive of their partners' presidential career and yet, there were differences. Smith (2001), a female community college president, conducted a survey on the role expectations of the community college presidential partner.

Smith (2001) found some similarities between university presidential partners and community college presidential partners. Both the university and community colleges did not formally recognize the female or male presidential partner through the institution's organizational chart or provide formal job descriptions. In addition, both the university and community colleges did not financially compensate the female or male presidential partner for performing the traditional role expectations (Smith, 2001).

The difference between the female and male presidential partners appeared in the performance of traditional roles and responsibilities. All community college male presidential partners stated that the Board of Trustees had articulated to them that they did not expect them to conduct the traditional roles performed by previous female presidential partners (Smith, 2001).

In Ostar's (1991) survey with both community college and university presidential partners there were differences in role expectations based on gender. Male presidential partners acknowledged that they saw their role as being supportive and attended college related events with their wife; however,

...almost all of the male partners say they do not plan and manage social events as do the female partners. Usually the institution hires a 'special events coordinator' to do that job. (Ostar, 1991, p. 35)

In addition, both surveys found that the institutions secured employment for the male presidential partner but no mention was made whether the female presidential partners received the same treatment (Ostar, 1991; Smith, 2001). It is assumed that institutions did not, since their stated expectations for female partners and male partners were at such variance.

### *Ethnicity*

Ethnicity is defined as being composed of people with a shared national origin or ancestry and shared characteristics such as language (Rosenblum & Travis, 2000, p.1). For the purposes of this study, ethnic groups will be identified as African American, Asian, Latina/o, American Indian, or White. Previous research failed to address the issue of and/or the impact of one's ethnicity on a presidential partner. In Smith's (2001)

survey with male presidential partners and previous surveys with university female presidential partners, all respondents were White (Corbally, 1977; Ostar, 1984).

In describing the experiences of women of color in the academy, Patricia Hill Collins (1986) described having an outsider presence inside a predominantly White patriarchal institution because of her ethnic heritage. Collins stated that although she had achieved the necessary credentials and stature to be part of the academy she still was not fully integrated into the White culture and would always remain on the outside looking in. Collins stated that she would always be the outsider and never the insider. I questioned whether ethnic minority presidential partners experienced similar insider/outsider perceptions. For example, do ethnic minority presidential partners perceive their ethnicity affecting their role expectations from the institution, i. e. interacting with White donors? Research studying the insider/outsider perspectives and the racial issues of presidential partners affecting their role expectations was lacking.

Photographs of the presidential partners were provided in the *AASCU Partner Directory*. Some of the presidential partners appeared to have an ethnic ancestry such as Asian, African American and/or Latino. There were photographs of presidential partners who appeared White in phenotype (skin color) and had a Spanish surname. Other presidential partners appeared not to be an ethnic minority but their name reflected a Latino surname. For example, there was one female presidential partner who had a Latino surname. However, when I checked the President's web page at the university it appeared that the female presidential partner had a non-Latino maiden name and was using her partner's last name.

Previous research had not been conducted on African American, Latina/o, and other ethnic minority university presidential partners; therefore, ethnicity was one factor in this study, which explored the role expectations of these university presidential partners.

### *Social Class Status*

The social class status of the university presidential partner was defined by one's position, role, and behavior in society. Goffman (1951) described status as a ranking process associated with privilege "according to the amount of social value that is placed upon it relative to other statuses in the same sector of social life" (p. 294). Therefore the status of a university presidential partner varied from community to community based on the social values and other statuses associated with that community.

Goffman (1951) stated that each group with a particular status was mutually able to convey to others "his conception of himself and of them is the same as their conception of themselves and him" (p. 294). One way to convey one's status was through displaying various status symbols. Some of these status symbols represented ranks of esteem such as being awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor or an insignia rank such as that of military personnel such as a Captain or Lt. Colonel.

Goffman (1951) identified occupational and social class as two types of symbols. The first one, occupational symbols, was based on earning credentials, i.e., education and/or training. The other occupational symbol was achieved "after the work relation was established and served to mark off levels of prestige and power within a formal organization" (p. 296).

Social class symbols displayed “levels of prestige and privilege” (Goffman, 1951, p. 296). The most common symbol of social class was wealth and the materials that are purchased by it, the power when it was used, and how well it was used. Social status symbols were also associated with people.

Goffman (1951) provided extensive examples of social status symbols, (a) possessing items that are scarce such as large flawless diamonds, (b) being associated with a family who had historical wealth such as shipping traders during the American Revolution, (c) possessing furniture made from hard woods, (d) owning historic homes or buildings with architectural significance, (e) owning a work of art, (f) attending the fine arts such as the ballet, plays, symphony, and the opera, (g) social behaviors and manners such as etiquette, deportment, vocabulary, dialect, (h) being a child of a prestigious family, (i) being associated with someone of high status, (j) cultivating symbols of class such as the arts, sports, languages, (k) a sophisticated cultivation of food, drink, clothes, and furnishings, and (l) the characteristics of their physical stature as a result of their diet, work, and environment (pp. 297-301). These symbols of privilege and social class are evident in the lives of university presidential partners. Its evidence could be a validation of the presidential partner’s social status and its affect on their role expectations.

It was unknown if the role expectations of the university presidential partner were based on social class and if the university supported these expectations symbolically. Social class was demonstrated with a variety of symbolic material resources that were provided by the organization. Holvino (2000) stated that resources

were made available to demonstrate a certain status such as access to personnel, facilities, and monetary funds to project that image of privileged status. For example, personalized stationary with the university watermark were made for the presidential partner to distribute as gifts.

Some university presidential partners received from the university such symbolic social class material resources as a designated office, personal assistant(s), official car and driver, an entertainment and travel budget, and/or household staff for the presidential or private home. It was assumed that these material resources supported the image of the presidential partner's privileged status in the university and her/his social status with the community and university benefactors.

In the case of the traditional White female university presidential partners, these women could have been identified to be as Daniels' (1991) describes "[p]rivileged women—those of the upper-middle and upper classes who do not have to earn their own living or help support their families...." (p. 116).

For example, the president for Kansas State University was Milton S. Eisenhower, who was the brother of U.S. President and Four-Star General Dwight D. and Mamie Eisenhower (Chance-Reay, 1999; Wichita State University President's Office, 2006). In the biography of the Milton Eisenhower family, his wife, Helen Eakin, a college graduate, was from a wealthy family, and did not work outside the home but concentrated on supporting her family and the university (Chance-Reay, 1999).

Daniels' (1991) study explored how privileged older women of economic and social rank were unable to pursue a traditional career. Privileged women were allowed to

develop a volunteer career in civic service. Daniels (1991) interviewed older women in the 1970s at the beginning of the women's movement and these privileged women were still under the "expectations about how one ought to behave, think, and feel about one's place in the world" (p. 118).

The role expectations of these privileged women were (a) responsibility to the family, (b) responsibility to class interests, (c) *noblesse oblige*, and (d) responsibility to self (Daniels, 1991, p. 118). *Family responsibility* included loyalty to her parents, her in-laws, and associated ancestors, respectively, thereby influencing her participation in activities that were related to family. For example, a privileged woman might serve as a board member on the family's philanthropic foundation. Other family loyalty might be following directions from the father over the husband's objections, following directions from both parents and in-laws over her opinion, maintaining the image of the family by not working, and instilling the importance of civic and philanthropic work to their children (Daniels, 1991).

The second role expectation was called *responsibility of class interests* (Daniels, 1991). Generally privileged women refused to work for pay because to do so would lower their status in the community; therefore, they were allowed to volunteer. These class interests are also protected by the privileged woman when they volunteer the help the poor, but not to empower the poor. Daniels used the Junior League as an example of such responsibility to class interests.

The third role, *noblesse oblige*, refers to the women who make a career of volunteering, an "altruistic service performed by those who have the resources for those

who don't" (Daniels, 1991, p. 124). In this role Daniels (1991) found some privileged women who maintained a "patronizing or condescending" attitude whether it is providing services to those who are less fortunate populations, i.e. Black youth projects; employing minorities, i.e. discussing a Black housekeeper with a drinking problem; or, restricting membership in the Junior League based on religion, i.e. Jews (pp. 124-125). These women would tell others how generous they were with their time, resources, and sympathy with others that were not of their own kind.

The last role of the privileged woman is their *responsibility to self*. These privileged women had made an effort to distance themselves from other privileged women and volunteered on projects that made a significant difference. These privileged women knew they could not work but they wanted to use their knowledge, skills and be respected in the community (Daniels, 1991).

Comparing Daniels' (1991) description of the privileged woman to the *Job Description of Presidential Spouse/Associate of the President* (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n.d.) there are many examples of where the volunteer job description or role expectations of the university presidential partner corresponded to the privileged woman's role responsibilities. The comparison can be reviewed in Table 1.

In the comparison of *Responsibility to Family* between Daniels (1991) and Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (n.d.) it shows that the privileged women's "family" was her parents and in-laws; and, with the presidential partner, the University and presidential family were her "family." Such designation of the university as "family" is commonplace in today's universities (Schulte, 1997).

*Responsibility to Class Interests* involved being a volunteer and not being paid for work. The first statement from the “Summary Functions” states that these role expectations should be volunteered (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n. d., p. 1).

In the third category, *Noblesse Oblige* was specific of what types of volunteer activities were appropriate. For the university partner a class status distance between the partner and the less fortunate would influence the type of volunteer work.

In the category of *Responsibility to Self*, Daniels (1991) identifies women who have decided to volunteer for projects that benefited their self-identity and confidence. In Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick (n. d), the job description identified the roles the partner must perform to improve their self worth to the institution.

Although it is assumed that ethnic minority presidential partners would be in the same social status class as other White university presidential partners and wealthy White university benefactors, its accuracy is unknown. The literature provided no information on the social class of any presidential partners. Therefore research will be conducted to determine if the social status of university presidential partners affects their leadership experiences and if ethnicity is a factor in its effectiveness.

#### *Positionality and Power*

Another factor related to the role expectations of university presidential partners is positionality and its potential power. Positionality is the power associated with the relationships, context, and the overlapping identities of the presidential partner with the president, and the university (Kezar, 2002). According to Kezar (2002), a positionality relationship, compounded with “gender, race, and role within the organization,” affected

<b>TABLE 1</b>	
<b>Comparison of Daniels' Role Expectations of Privileged Women to the Role Expectations of University Presidential Partners</b>	
<b>Daniels (1991)</b>	<b>Job Description (Kirkpatrick &amp; Kirkpatrick , n.d.)</b>
Responsibility to Family	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide institutional and presidential social support.</li> <li>2. Overseeing the official University residence, either on or off campus, University or privately owned.</li> <li>3. Engage in official entertaining for students, faculty, staff and external support constituencies.</li> <li>4. Serve as liaison to the President's staff and event or community relations staff for purposes of scheduling presidential and spousal activities and time.</li> </ol>
Responsibility to Class interests	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize and/or attend fundraising events...donor recognition and cultivation events.</li> <li>2. Serve as community leader for organizations and projects of general and educational benefit and for those relevant to the University mission.</li> <li>3. Formally represent the University at local, state, and national events and meetings.</li> <li>4. Travel for recruitment of students, meetings with alumni, meetings of higher education associations, attendance at conferences on matters affecting the University, meetings with prospective and current donors, and representations in the University's international programs and projects.</li> <li>5. Plan and orchestrate social events.</li> </ol>
<i>Noblesse Oblige</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage as a community volunteer in areas such as civic, educational, artistic, and social service activities.</li> <li>2. Participate in fund drives for local institutions and organizations, i.e. hospitals and schools.</li> </ol>
Responsibility to Self	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in seminars and workshops of interest to the University and relevant to the role of presidential spouse.</li> <li>2. Engage in activities which further develop skills and abilities related to job functions.</li> </ol>

the construction of leadership potential (p. 558).

Universities historically had demonstrated their support for the traditional White female presidential partner by bestowing the prestigious title of “First Lady” (Corbally, 1977; Ostar, 1983; Clodius & Magrath, 1984; Chance-Reay, 1999) and later adapting the title when the presidential partner was male to “First Gentleman.” Such title designations were an example of the power associated with the position and support from the university. Other designations of positionality included limiting access to the presidential partner through a university gatekeeper and providing a personal assistant and housekeeper.

Exploring Kezar’s discussion of positionality and taking into account that educational institutions were patriarchal, how would the organizational culture respond to the positionality and power based on the ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class of the presidential partners? Would the university support the presidential partner who decided to initiate a program or project with funding, personnel, and public recognition regardless of ethnicity or sexual orientation?

Regardless, research was lacking on positionality and power associated with the presidential partner and whether positionality and power differed based on the presidential partners’ ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class.

### *Sexual Orientation*

The final intersecting factor with the university’s role expectations was the sexual orientation of the presidential partner. The staff at AASCU stated that there were at least 15 openly gay university presidents but when pressed for identification of said

presidents, AASCU refused to provide a list (AASCU Telephone conversation, October 16, 2005). AASCU stated that their membership records were confidential. I could only speculate that perhaps the fifteen gay presidents on AASCU's membership rolls were not openly gay and preferred to have their sexual orientation private.

An extensive review through electronic databases revealed a miniscule number of same-sex university presidential partnerships (Dowdall, 2000; Kennedy, 2006). The latest article identified three openly gay presidents and their partners (Fain, 2007). The openly gay presidential partners were at private universities in urban communities and one presidential couple lived in the university presidential house.

Fain (2007) observed that one of the reasons that openly gay presidents had not been hired in public universities was because such institutions were conservative in their decision-making. Universities saw the presidential couple's role important in fundraising and entertaining and worried about anything that would affect fundraising.

One potential problem that looms for gay administrators who want to be presidents is the important social role played by many presidential partners. A gay president's partner playing host to donors at the presidential mansion could test the open-mindedness of trustees, local officials, or the news media. (Fain, 2007, p. 2)

It would appear that regardless of the sexual orientation of the presidential couple the university expected the presidential partner to be involved in entertaining and fundraising on behalf of the university. Research is needed on identifying the role expectations of same sex presidential partners and to learn if they perceived their sexual orientation as a factor in the university's role expectations.

### *Theoretical Framework*

The theoretical framework utilized for this study was role theory as defined in the seminal work of Biddle and Thomas (1966). Role theory assists in explaining the person's behavior based on their perceived social position and the assumed role expectations held by themselves and others. Within role theory there were five concepts: role performance based on expectations and social position; organizational; consensus; conformity; conflict and role taking. This study will investigate the experiences of presidential partners based on the university's traditional role expectations within the context of roles (expectations and social position), organizational structure, and the consensus of roles, role conformity, role conflict and role taking. I will discuss each concept with examples, when appropriate.

First, role theory was defined as the characteristic and patterned social behavior (role expectations) of people who are identified with a particular social position. Biddle revealed, "human beings behave in ways that are different and predictable depending on their respective social identities and the situation" (Biddle, 1986, p. 68). For example, the female presidential partners demonstrated a social behavior (role) they thought appropriate for the social position of "First Lady" of a university and the performance of role expectations that would be acceptable by the Regents, the campus community, and the community.

Within role theory were role expectations or prescriptions. Biddle and Thomas (1966) defined role expectations or prescriptions as "formal and informal, expressed and

implicit, individual and shared; and, in whatever form, prescriptions varied in permissiveness, completeness, complexity, and in the degree to which they are codified and universal” (p. 103). Role expectations were also defined as standards that were held “about a behavior likely exhibited by a person” (p. 10).

Within Biddle and Thomas’s (1986) work on role theory, further discussion on roles covered the process of attaining one’s social status or social position. A person acquired different positions throughout the course of their life and their identity referred to those positions or status “within the social structure applicable to the given structure and established their rights and obligations with reference to others holding positions within the same structure” (Davis, 1966, p. 67).

According to Biddle and Thomas (1986) as a consequence of being a person in a recognized position (i.e. presidential partner) that person had a symbol of social status, property or identification. In the example of the partner of the president the traditional symbol would have been “First Lady.” With the gender of the presidential partner changing in recent years the symbolic title would be the “Presidential Partner,” “First Lady,” or “First Gentleman,” or whatever the local social and organizational structure dictated (p. 49). For example, at Baylor University the institution and community traditionally identified the university president’s partner as “The First Lady.”

Within social status, there were three types of social status: economic, political, and prestige. According to Benoit (1966) economic status was defined by wealth and power, political status was defined not by wealth but by the power that the person

wielded. The last type was prestige status and that was associated with being an object of admiration, deference, imitation, suggestion, and the center of attention.

Using Benoit's description of the three types of social status within role theory and with the limited research literature the university presidential partner could possess the social status of prestige and political status because of the positionality of the president. Economic social status depended on the image of the university and president. For example, the president at Harvard or MIT could have prestige and political social status. If the president of Harvard were Warren Buffet, the billionaire, the presidential partner (if he were married) would possess economic status as well as prestige and political social status.

Biddle (1986) revealed one context within role theory as *organizational* role theory. Organizational role theory was when the person's position or status demonstrates their successful behavior in that particular structure (i.e. university or college). For example, within the organizational structure of higher education, a person who has worked hard in upwardly mobile positions eventually became a provost, president, or chancellor. Within that given structure that person had achieved a high social status and was identified with an office of high stature, i.e. provost, president, chancellor. The college president's partner would have that same social position and status because of their marriage or union with the president. Thomas and Biddle (1966) would define the partner's "membership" into the social status and position as an ascribed status because of the marriage.

The remaining four concepts in role theory were consensus, conformity, role conflict and role taking (Turner, 1956; Benoit, 1966; Biddle & Thomas, 1966; Blood & Wolfe, 1966; Parson, 1966; Thomas & Biddle, 1966; Burr, 1972; Biddle, 1986; Turner, 1990). Please refer to Figure 1 for the discussion of the following four concepts of role theory: consensus, conformity, conflict, and role taking.

Consensus within the context of role theory was defined as to the sameness in behavior or norms or “the degree of agreement of individuals on a given topic” (Thomas & Biddle, 1966, p. 33). One factor of this research study was to learn whether there was a consensus of the role expectations between the university and the presidential partner.

Conformity within the context of role theory refers to whether there has been communication in having one’s behavior conform to the expectations of that role. Another context of the research study will be to see what level of conformity takes place in the role expectations of the university presidential partners.

The next concept was role conflict that was defined as “the concurrent appearance of two or more incompatible expectations for the behavior of a person” (Biddle, 1986, p. 82). Biddle continued in his discussion of other structural problems that occur in social systems. These structural conditions within role conflict were

- Role ambiguity: condition in which expectations are incomplete or insufficient to guide behavior.
- Role malintegration: when roles do not fit well together.
- Role discontinuity: when the person must perform a sequence of malintegrated roles.
- Role overload: when the person is faced with too many expectations. (Biddle, 1986, p. 83)

The last concept was role taking. Role taking was first articulated by Margaret Mead and “suggested” that adequate development of the self and participation in social interaction both require that the person ‘take the role of the other’ (Biddle, 1986, p. 84) Biddle continued that since Mead, others’ research on role taking has been fragmented and has differed in interpretation; however, “both traditions have assumed that role taking ability was a blessing and that successful role taking would facilitate personal development and social integration” (p. 84).

After investigating Biddle’s work on role theory, I understood that it was possible that any of these role concepts could emerge in this study. Previous survey results, although outdated, showed some consensus, conformity, role ambiguity, and role overload between the university’s traditional role expectations and the presidential partners. However since that time the presidential partners had become more diverse (i.e. gender, ethnicity, dual careers, and/or sexual orientation) which could create potential conflict with the university’s role expectations as well as with the community’s cultural climate.

By using role theory and the various concepts associated with role theory, I conducted a qualitative research study on the complexities and intersecting factors of the presidential partner’s gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, power, and positionality and show how these factors affected the presidential partner’s roles with the university and the community’s patriarchal expectations (Biddle & Thomas, 1966: Biddle, 1985).

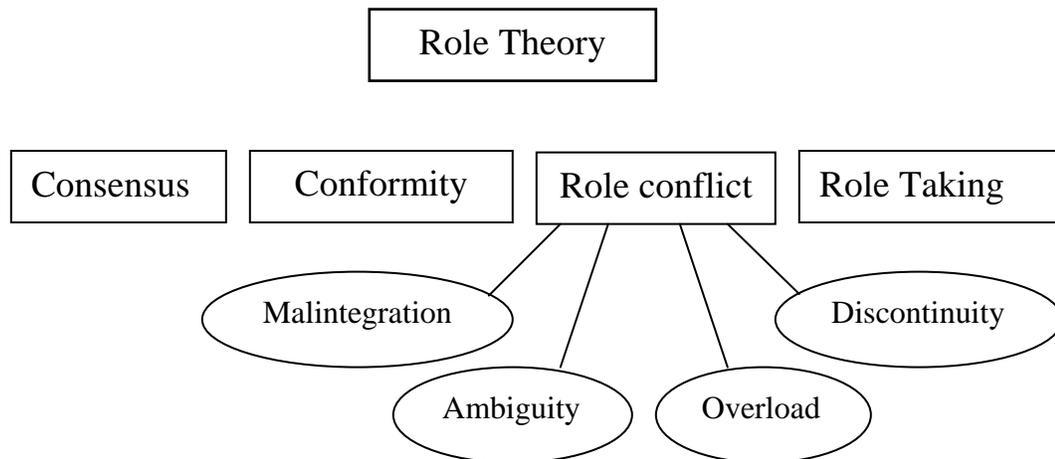


FIG. 1. Role Theory. Four concepts within role theory include role consensus, role conformity, role conflict, and role taking. When a presidential partner experiences malintegration, ambiguity, overload, and discontinuity with the university role expectations, role conflict could occur.

### *Conclusion*

The literature review was structured by providing a historical and current account of the university presidential partner and the potential factors that affected the presidential partner and university's role expectations. These intersecting factors may be based on (a) institutional patriarchal culture, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity, (d) social class, (e) positionality of the presidential partner to their partner, (f) sexual orientation, and (g) role conflict or ambiguity.

The next chapter will describe the methodology that was utilized in planning and conducting this study. The methodology was developed to elicit extensive and candid

information on the role expectations from the university presidential partners; it operated with great success.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

*There I was. I had driven for three days with Mapquest directions into a metro community similar to Los Angeles or Washington, D. C. without a cell phone. I found myself in a neighborhood that reminded me of doomsday futuristic sci-films. Did I just hear a car backfiring or were those gunshots? The city sounds of police sirens, emergency vehicles and fire trucks were racing around me. I cautiously drove to the address. I observed a drug sale transaction nearby and the ladies of the night working the day shift. I did not feel confident that I was at the correct address. I drove to the next block and pulled over to re-read my instructions. I ignored the voices of countless friends who had strongly suggested I acquire a cell phone for these long-distance trips and focused on the map before me. With a decent sense of direction and muttered words of encouragement, I maneuvered the city streets and alleys until I arrived to my destination with 30 minutes to spare before the interview.*

The trip was one of the exciting experiences in conducting my research study. I would be lying if I said that I did not become lost again but getting lost was only one of several events that happened while conducting a naturalistic inquiry research study.

*Chapter III* describes the methodology developed to conduct a naturalistic inquiry research study. The methodology was presented in its various stages of development since a naturalistic inquiry is an “emergent” process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 248). The initial stages include the discussion of the theoretical and conceptual framework. Procedural descriptions of the research design include the selection process of the respondents and development of the interview protocol. The data collection and analysis stages describe the procedures used to gather the data and protect the confidentiality of the respondents while exploring the research questions.

The research study intended to explore the leadership experiences of university presidential partners. Using role theory as a guide (see discussion in *Chapter II*), I explored the complexities and intersecting factors of the presidential partner’s gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and positionality and its effects on their role expectations (Biddle & Thomas, 1966; Biddle, 1986).

Previous research on university presidential partners was conducted from a positivist perspective. Previous studies were replications of the original study by Corbally (1977) and subsequent results showed little variation in the findings. The overall results showed that the majority of traditional and non-traditional university presidential partners were White, middle- to upper-class females with a college education who rarely received formal recognition by the university and were rarely

compensated for their work serving as the goodwill ambassador for the university. Although later studies showed an increase of female presidential partners maintaining a full-time career, the surveys showed that several of the career female presidential partners were still expected by the university to maintain the traditional role expectations. As a consequence, many presidential partners quit their jobs or reduced their work hours drastically. The Smith (1991) report showed that the university did not have any role expectations for the male presidential partners. All surveys lacked any information on ethnic minority presidential partners.

Thirty years ago the last study was conducted on the experiences of university presidential partners and that study was quantitative (Ostar, 1977). A naturalistic inquiry paradigm may provide an exploratory process to gain insight and data on the experiences and challenges facing university presidential partners.

This study was conducted using the naturalistic inquiry research paradigm based on Lincoln and Guba (1985). Naturalistic inquiry was the methodology chosen because of the nature of the interaction between the researcher and the human respondents in their natural settings and in their multiple realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I also consulted Spradley (1979) who provided a variety of methods in structuring the interview questions, which resulted in thick descriptions.

The overarching research question that guided this study was how the university's traditional role expectations affected the university presidential partners:

1. What are the traditional role expectations that presidential partners are expected to perform?

2. How are the university presidential partners influenced to perform the University's traditional role expectations?
3. How does the university presidential partner perceive their ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation affecting the performance of their role expectations?
4. How does the university presidential partner perceive social class affecting their role?
5. How does positionality relate to the university presidential partners role expectations?
6. How have universities changed their support for the presidential partners?

### *Research Design*

The population for this study was presidential partners from four-year universities and colleges in the United States. The universities were affiliated with five national president's associations, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), Association of American Universities (AAU), American Council on Education (ACE), Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), and the National Association of State and University Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC). These associations had presidential partner committees that provided information, mentors, and workshop training at the annual conferences.

I checked each of the college president national association web sites to locate information for or about the presidential partners. I searched for membership information, data on the presidential partners such as nationality, numbers of years as a presidential partner, or referral services and other potential resources that helped presidential partners with any questions on the university's role expectations.

After investigating all five presidents' associations, it appeared that the most extensive and consistent orientation sessions and web support for presidential partners was the CIC website. The website had annual conference information for the current year and archival records for the previous years. The Council of Independent Colleges (n.d.) also had available on the website a handbook, *Presidential Spouse 101*, that had been created for one of its annual programs. The contents were a re-affirmation of the traditional role expectations with a few comments for male presidential partners.

#### *Sites, Respondents, and Sampling*

Accessing the respondents remained a challenge throughout the research study. The presidential partner introduced in *Chapter I* recommended that I attend the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) national conference and specifically attend the presidential partner session to introduce this study to the attendees. The meeting was one method to identify potential respondents who met my criteria and who were interested in participating in this study.

When I contacted AASCU to inquire about the registration process as a guest, I learned that only presidents and their partners were allowed to attend the conference (AASCU E-mail correspondence, November 3, 2005). As I was directed from one

AASCU staff member to another and repeatedly denied access to AASCU's presidential partner committee president, I understood the meaning of the word "gatekeeper" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 234). The gatekeeper served as a barrier between you and the intended respondents. Later as I tried to contact individual presidential partners, I learned that gatekeepers came in the guise of president's national association personnel, university personnel, or even university presidents.

Another example of AASCU's role as a gatekeeper was realized by their refusal to provide access to the presidential partner's membership directory (E-mail correspondence, October 26, 2005). However, when I shared the response I had received from the AASCU administrators and staff to the presidential partner mentioned in *Chapter I*, the immediate response was to give me her copy of the latest *AASCU Partner Directory*.

Later as I conducted my interviews, several presidential partners volunteered to discuss my study with their colleagues to see if any of them were interested in participating in this study. These types of referrals by the presidential partners, known as purposive sampling, helped me secure additional interviews with male and ethnic minority presidential partners. Purposive is refers to obtaining a sampling with a purpose or a specific population in mind. In this case, I was seeking presidential partners who were male, ethnic minorities, GBLT, had a career, and/or were very active in performing university work (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I obtained a copy of the National Association of State and University Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) conference attendees list, which provided some names of female

and male presidential partners. I perused the websites of the other national president's associations. I obtained a list of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

I used the *AASCU Partner Directory*, searched through the various presidents' national association website membership lists, and used the list of Historically Black colleges and universities. I compiled a list of 70 potential respondents and searched through the university websites to gather specific information on presidential partners. I learned that several university presidents did not mention their family. In addition, my dissertation committee members provided recommendations of presidential partners they knew who demonstrated active involvement on the university campus and/or were racially and culturally diverse. Eventually I developed a list of potential respondents who were diverse in gender, ethnicity, and employment status.

I identified 40 presidential partners with various forms of contact information including misspellings, invalid e-mail addresses, and unlisted telephone numbers. Some presidential partner's e-mail addresses were obtained through web pages listing the administration, particularly the university President's Office webpage, the university's general e-mail directory listing, or the administrative assistant for the president and/or the presidential partner. Other presidential partners' contact information was available through the *AASCU Partner Directory* and the *NASULGC Membership Directory*.

There were two desired populations that became a challenge to identify for inclusion in this study. One was identifying a same sex presidential partner and the other was the ethnic minority male such as Latinos, Asians, and African Americans.

I was initially unable to identify any same sex presidential partnerships. When speaking with an AASCU staff member by phone, I learned that there were at least 15 openly gay presidential partnerships; however, when I asked, they refused to provide me with their names citing confidentiality of their membership records (AASCU staff member, November 3, 2005, telephone conversation). Therefore I searched through various electronic search engines and after several weeks of diligent work I was able to identify and obtain contact information for same-sex university presidential partnerships from non-scholarly newspapers and news magazines such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The Advocate*.

The second challenge was accessing male ethnic minority presidential partners. There were several Latino community college presidential partners but very few were found at universities. I identified and contacted two Latino presidential partners directly and through their partner but neither partner nor university president responded to my requests. I was unable to locate an Asian presidential partner, but one African American male graciously agreed to participate.

In addition to ensuring a diverse pool of respondents, other factors played into my selection process. The primary factor was protecting the identity of the respondent; therefore, I was selective in the geographical location of the respondents. I knew that readers would assume that Latino and African American presidential partners were located primarily in the South so I kept that in mind while I developed my methodology and respondent pool.

The other factor was economics. Since I was paying for all travel expenses without the benefit of a research grant, I was tempted to conduct interviews primarily in Texas and the surrounding states but decided against this strategy. If I wanted to interview a diverse population and ensure confidentiality I knew I needed to leave the region. Therefore, I traveled to 20 states from the West Coast to the East Coast from late January to early May 2007.

### *Instrumentation*

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the instrument for a “naturalist inquiry is the human” (p. 236) and in this study that would be me. As the “instrument” or principal researcher I would be the one to carry out the study. I would be the one responsible for all of the planning, production, and implementation for the study. In addition, I would be the primary person for data collection, analysis, field notes and journaling, and records and document review. As the principal researcher I would be responsible for conducting the member checks, and checking for rigor.

### *Introducing the Study to Respondents*

Contacting the presidential partners was conducted through electronic mail (e-mail). The e-mails were sent to the gatekeepers (presidents and administrative assistants). I requested that the gatekeepers forward an attached letter to the presidential partner (see *Appendix B. Sample Letter to the Presidential Partner*) and the information consent form (see *Appendix C. Sample Information Consent Form*). The e-mail to the gatekeepers described briefly the nature of the request and an expression of gratitude for their assistance. I sent e-mails to 19 gatekeepers. These gatekeepers were either through

the President's Office personnel (6), through the president's personal e-mail address (11), or referrals from friends (2).

The e-mail requests that were sent to the university president were similar to the e-mails sent to the office personnel and expressed an apology for the inconvenience and appreciation for their assistance. A sample of the e-mail to the university president is available in *Appendix D. Sample Letter sent to University President* and a copy of the letter sent to the administrative assistant is located in *Appendix E. Sample Letter sent to Gatekeeper*.

Ten of the eleven e-mails were forwarded from the president to their partner. Of the e-mails (6) that were sent to the administrative assistants, one was forwarded to the presidential partner. When I realized that communicating through the administrative assistants or gatekeeper was not as successful as I had anticipated, I began sending the requests directly to the university president. University presidents responded immediately and always in the affirmative.

Once I received an affirmative response to participate in this study from the presidential partner, I replied either through e-mail or at their request by telephone. If I spoke with the presidential partner via telephone, I would thank them for agreeing to participate in this study and asked if they had received the consent form and letter of invitation. I would provide them with whatever information they needed. Six of the ten partners requested copies of the original correspondence because their partners had neglected to forward the attachment to them. Three research respondents asked for a copy of the interview questions beforehand so as to prepare for the interview. I learned

during the data collection period that my dissertation chair had received three telephone calls requesting verification of my research study.

After I received acceptance notices to be interviewed from the presidential partners, I contacted them with an e-mail expressing my appreciation and began scheduling the interviews. Since I would be flying or driving to their campuses, I budgeted and coordinated travel plans that encompassed flights, car rentals, and hotels. Whenever I could I clustered interviews if the respondents were in the same state or geographical region. Two interviews were re-scheduled due to winter weather conditions and two respondents and I agreed to meet in another state. In summary, from the list of 40 potential research respondents I contacted, I received 24 replies of acceptance.

#### *Developing Interview Questions*

The research study questions were used as the guide in the development of the interview questions. Descriptive and structured questions were created for the interview protocol (Spradley, 1979). The purpose of the descriptive and structured questions was to initiate a conversation with the presidential partner and elicit as much information on their thoughts and experiences as possible. As an example, the second research question, “How are the university presidential partners influenced to perform the university’s traditional role expectations?” included an explanation of my knowledge of the role of a presidential partner followed by two structural questions.

*I realized from what I have been reading that being a presidential partner can keep you quite busy. I started reviewing the literature on presidential partners and their roles and responsibilities. There was the traditional role of entertaining faculty, students, alumni and Board of Trustees; maintaining the Presidential home; representing*

*the university at various functions; and, also serving on a variety of committees. So this leads me to the next question.*

- 1. During the interviewing process for the president's position, what did the Regents discuss with your partner or with you about your role as the presidential partner?*
- 2. What was the discussion about you maintaining your professional career?*

The initial set of interview questions reflected the five research questions; see *Appendix F. Sample Preliminary Interview Questions*. I created other specific questions that were added to the interview protocol when I was interviewing a male and/or ethnic minority presidential partner. For example, the specific question for the gay partner follows.

*How has the difference in sexual orientation affected your experience with the university's role expectations?*

The next example is the specific question for an ethnic minority male partner.

*There are times when the presidential couple is not only new to the community but also the first Latino, Black or Asian president, or the first female president. In your role as the presidential partner, how has this difference in gender and ethnicity affected your role expectations in the college and community?*

However after the first three interviews, I realized that I was not getting enough information from the respondents about their experiences as a traditional and/or non-traditional presidential partner. In other words, the more I learned during the interview process, the more I realized that I was not establishing a foundation whether there were university roles expectations, the respondent's personal expectations as the presidential partner, and the respondent's career agenda. My realization of the weaknesses in the original set of questions affirmed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) description of the emergent

process of using a naturalistic inquiry process. Lincoln and Guba stated that in a qualitative study changes might be needed in the interview protocol in order to obtain more data or seek clarification.

Therefore, I decided revisions were needed in the interview protocol and I returned to Spradley (1979) and reviewed previous interview question samples I had created for a previous pilot study on university presidential partners and modified the interview questions. Several interview questions were revised from an unstructured question into a descriptive question with an explanation. I obtained better results and gathered richer descriptive data with the revised questions.

For example, for the fifth research question, “What factors empowered presidential partners to divert from the traditional role of a university presidential partner conducting activities on behalf of the university?” was originally constructed as a descriptive question (Spradley, 1979).

Original Interview Question:

*First, please tell me about your background and your journey to becoming a university presidential partner.*

That question was revised to contain an explanation followed by a compounded structured question.

Revised Interview Question:

*In the literature that I have been reading, a significant number of university presidents have been in academia for quite some time.*

*Did you ever think you would find yourself as a presidential partner and what in your background do you think has prepared you for this role?*

Furthermore, I decided to create questions that delved further into the respondent's experiences and challenges because I thought some of the original questions were not obtaining enough descriptions of their experiences. For example, as part of the third research question, "How does the university presidential partner perceive their ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation affecting their performance of their role expectations?" the following question was added to the original interview protocol.

New interview question:

*Were you ever asked to do something as the presidential partner that made you uncomfortable? If so, how did you handle it?*

As a result, the answers to the revised questions elicited an expansive description of the presidential partner's experiences, challenges, successes and personal insight.

Another change was made to the interview protocol. For the fifth research question, "How does positionality relate to the constructions of leadership initiatives by university presidential partners?" the following question was added to elicit more descriptive information.

Modified interview question:

*I also read that many presidential partners have decided to do something different with their lives than the traditional role.*

- 1. As the presidential partner, what roles had you chosen for you and why? (Why were you working outside the home?)*
- 2. How has the institution supported you in your professional career?*
- 3. If the institution still required you to maintain some of the traditional roles,*

*what support did you receive in handling those roles? (Entertaining, planning, hosting, correspondence,)*

The question was constructed using an explanation followed by three structured questions. Sometimes the respondent would naturally continue into the other questions without my asking. I also placed reminders or cue notes in parentheses to keep the respondent and me focused.

The final set of questions, which reflected the six research questions of the research study are in *Appendix G. Sample Final Version of Presidential Partner Interview Protocol*.

### *Data Collection*

Data were gathered via a variety of techniques including face-to-face interviews; observations recorded before, during, and after the interviews; and, identifying, accessing, and examining records and documents. Additional steps were taken to ensure accurate and secure recordkeeping of the research data and assurances of confidentiality for the respondents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### *Interviews*

The interview protocol changed as more interviews were conducted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Structuring the interview was important because of my assumption of the presidential partner's political and social stature. My assumptions were based on my knowledge of the public, political and cultural nature of being a figurehead of an

organization. The status of being the partner of the university president was as respected, visible, and political as their partner. I structured the interview to show my respect for their position and avoided any sensitive questions that could be misinterpreted as being politically charged. For example, some of the universities and the administration had experienced harsh and negative national media exposure in the passed two to five years due to inappropriate criminal, moral, or ethical behavior and I did not ask questions about these unfortunate events and how it had affected their university work.

My intent was both to gather as much data from the respondents and at the same time, develop a professional and empathetic rapport with them. My research into the history and tradition of presidential partners provided me with a profile that depicted them as belonging to an elite social class. These presidential partners who lived a public, complex, and busy life received little recognition and appreciation for all of their efforts from the university and public (Corbally, 1977, Ostar, 1984, Clodius and Magrath, 1984). I did not want my physical appearance to be a distraction and perhaps influence the interview. I decided I would not volunteer any information about my previous administrative career in higher education. Therefore, keeping in mind the stature of a university presidential partner and seeking entry into their unique world, I decided to structure the interview as a “phenomenal” interview. A phenomenal interview refers to an interview that is conducted when “both interviewer and respondent are ‘caring companions’ with a commitment to an ‘empathic search’” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 269).

In maintaining a phenomenal interview, I decided to acknowledge the elite social class status of the university presidential partner by maintaining the physical appearance of a graduate student and not of an upper-middle class, former higher education administrative professional (Y. S. Lincoln, personal conversation, May 12, 2007).

My main concern was to establish trustworthiness with the presidential partner. Trustworthiness in a naturalistic study has many techniques to ensure the study has value, credibility, reliability, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this particular study, trustworthiness meant to establish a rapport of trust with the presidential partners of the interviewing process and reassure them that my focus was on their experiences as university presidential partner. I was concerned that if the presidential partner thought I had an active network in higher education administration, especially in their state, they would not be able to trust me to keep confidences and provide candid perceptions. Therefore I dressed casually for all interviews sans make-up. I also verbally and physically deferred to their status as an authority figure by asking them to make the decisions in scheduling the interview and the post-interview process. My compliments on their homes, furnishings, personal attire, jewelry, and lifestyle were genuine.

In the logistical planning process for the interviews, I had to work around their busy schedules. Most of the time the presidential partners were traveling, attending conferences, teaching, working off campus, taking care of family, and/or had other university related commitments. The presidential partner and I would have to forward

two or more e-mails before meetings were scheduled and confirmed. Two interviews were re-scheduled due to winter weather conditions.

Once I received their personal data (address and various telephone numbers), I used the Internet for driving directions and booking appropriate travel plans (air, car rental, hotel). One partner asked that I keep their residential address information confidential.

The interviews were structured for approximately 90 minutes. The actual length of the interviews varied from 90 minutes to four hours. The interviews were not audio taped but were conducted face-to-face with me taking field notes on the interview protocol sheets. I decided not to audio record the interviews. My decision to use field notes and interview notes specifically for this particular research population was based on the advantages outlined by Lincoln & Guba (1985). Research field notes

[A]re not as threatening to the respondent as is a recording ...the process of taking notes keeps the investigator alert and responsive...are not respondent to the technical difficulties that beset recordings...provides ready access to the investigator who may wish to return to an earlier point and refresh his or her own and the respondent's memory...permits the investigator to record his or her own thoughts, whether an insight that has occurred that should be followed up or simply a comment....(Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 241)

Methodology aside, the primary reason for not recording the interview was that the respondent's voices were recognizable and I understood how important it was to protect the respondent's identity (Y. S. Lincoln, personal conversation, May 12, 2007).

All but two of the interviews took place at the presidential partner's residence. When two presidential partners learned that I did not have grant funding to assist with

my travel expenses, they invited me to stay in their home. Seven partners invited me to lunch and everyone offered me something to drink. Some presidential partners were gracious in offering to meet me at alternative geographic locations to reduce my travel expenses. All presidential partners were warm, hospitable, and expressed an interest in the research study and results.

I arrived at least 10 minutes before each interview and wrote observational notes of the home, its surroundings, and documented how to get to the house in my field notes. I used the front entrance of the house unless directed otherwise. At one university owned presidential house the front door was not easily identifiable because of its location on campus, the houses' square shape and identical front and back doors.

After the initial introductions were made, we would decide which room to conduct the interview. In the privately owned homes we usually met in the living room, dining room, or library. For the university owned presidential homes, the interviews were conducted in a variety of parlors that were used for entertaining. One interview took place in a basement. I was offered refreshments, we would sit down, and I would begin the interview.

At the beginning of the interview, I reviewed with the respondent the purpose of this study and my appreciation for their interest and participation. I reviewed the *Information Consent Form* and asked them to review and sign it. I provided them with their copy of the consent form to keep. I informed the respondent of their randomly selected alias that would be used in this study and all of the presidential partners expressed amusement with their assigned name. Many times we talked about how their

alias came about and the light-hearted conversational exchange seemed to put the respondent at ease as well as being another method for establishing trustworthiness.

The interview questions were written on paper and I wrote brief notes on the paper as the respondent spoke. The process allowed me to concentrate on their answers and their non-verbal cues (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I tried to maintain eye contact as much as possible. At times I asked follow-up questions whenever I needed clarity. The respondents had their own questions about the interview questions or the study and I answered their questions. At times the phone rang or people interrupted us and we stopped temporarily for a minute or two but interruptions rarely happened.

After the interview was finished I told the respondent how much I appreciated their participation and reminded them that when I returned to my home, I would type up my interview notes and as a method for member checking, I would send the notes to them for their review. One type of member checking is when the researcher sends a copy of the interview to the respondent (member) and they check the interview sheets to make sure the information they gave was accurate. The respondents also have the choice to eliminate, clarify and/or add information to the interview answers. I told the presidential partners that they could make any changes and corrections and to return their sheets to me within 2 weeks. I gave the respondent the option to either receive my interview notes through e-mail or the postal system. Four of the respondents preferred to receive the interview notes by the postal system.

There were three respondents who asked for an advanced copy of the interview and I sent them via e-mail. During the interviewing process, I noticed that these

respondents had hand-written answers on their interview sheets which contained factual data and various notes. After each of those interviews, I asked to look at their answer sheets to make sure I had covered everything they had written down. That experience was quite beneficial for data collection and for eliciting accurate information about their perceptions and experiences.

After each interview I wrote my field notes and immediately typed up the interview notes (further discussion of field notes are in the section marked *Observations*). My goal was to complete typing the interview notes within 24 hours after returning from the interview while my memory of the interview and observations of the environment were fresh. I sent an electronic e-mail thank you note and a hand-written note of appreciation to each respondent.

### *Record Keeping*

Aliases were created to protect the identity of the respondent. Thorough descriptions of the development of the respondent alias names are found in the section marked as *Assurances of Confidentiality*.

For recordkeeping purposes I created an alias identification key that linked the alias to the respondent. The key contained the presidential partner's name, their partner's name, the university, and gender, and ethnicity, date of interview, thank you note verification, and interview ranking order. The identification key was kept separate from the respondents' file folders. The identification key was in a secure locked depository and not located in the same building as the respondent's file folders.

For each respondent I created a folder that included hardcopies of my traveling and/or driving information, copies of the handwritten interview notes, first draft of interview notes and the final edited copy of interview notes. In addition, hardcopies of the e-mail correspondence and/or telephone notes with the respondent and/or their gatekeeper were included in the folder. Depending on the strategy I used in locating their e-mail or accessing a gatekeeper, there were additional documents in the folders outlining the process used to contact the presidential partner. These folders were arranged alphabetically by their alias and located in a secured locked location (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### *Observations*

Observations were recorded at various opportunities. Guba and Lincoln (1985) emphasized that the “major advantage of direct observation...that it provided here-and-now experiences in depth” (p. 273). My observations were recorded in the form of field notes, which were maintained during the entire research process. These observations allowed me to analyze and reflect on the data as it was gathered and processed (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). My observations included non-verbal cues. Although non-verbal cues were simple or complex, I chose to record non-verbal cues when I felt it added emphasis to the interview or during times of reflection after the interview (Guba & Lincoln, 1985).

When I spoke with the respondents before the interview, I wrote observation notes in my journal based on our conversations. I tried to arrive at least 10 to 20 minutes early for the interview to make sure I had the correct address. I wrote descriptive

observations of the presidential home, campus physical environment, and/or community. Even with all my meticulous planning I lost my direction a few times.

During the interview I wrote “condensed” notes that were a phrase, simple word, or unconnected sentences (Spradley, 1979, p. 75). These condensed notes were written directly on the interview sheets and I created abbreviations for simple words and at times would scribble a word or phrase followed by a question mark (?) to remind me to do some follow-up work on that item.

After the interview, I drove to a restaurant or empty parking lot and wrote additional comments on the interview notes to “flesh” out some of the condensed notes I had written and to make additional observations of the interview process, the respondent, the surroundings, and especially any verbal and non-verbal clues I had received during the interview.

Other observations were recorded in an interview notes journal that was an “expanded account of the condensed version” which was basically additional observations I had from the interview (Spradley, 1979, p. 75). For days and weeks after each interview I continued to think of the interview and respondent and wrote any additional observations and thoughts on the interview notes journal. These observations provided additional rich data for the study.

The last set of recorded observations I maintained were my “field work journal” or my diary (Spradley, 1979, p. 76). This diary provided me an outlet to write down observations of the interaction that had taken place that did not necessarily need to be in other journals. The diary included my concerns of methodology and thoughts of how

some interviews were portrayed. Several of my “eureka” moments were recorded as well.

I approached some of the presidential partners with the request to follow them in their normal daily routines (“shadowing”) so I could observe their interactions with university personnel and the community. The presidential partners that agreed to have me “shadow” them invited me to stay at their home. These observations took place anywhere from 2 to 4 days.

For the partners that I shadowed, I kept a field notes journal with me at all times and wrote notes at various times and locations. The respondents were aware that I was taking notes and they did not appear concerned when I did. I usually waited until the respondent was involved in an activity before I started writing.

I also wrote observations of how I personally was treated by the public when I was around the White presidential partners. I was curious on how a Latina, who was in the company of a White presidential partner, would be treated by non-ethnic minority men and women on campus and in the community.

### *Records and Documents*

Identifying books and articles on university presidential partners was quite difficult and what were available were repetitive surveys and out-dated quantitative data. Therefore I relied heavily on documents from the national president’s associations or items provided by the presidential partners.

Records are defined as items that are “written or recorded statement prepared by or for an individual or organization for the purpose of *attesting to an event or providing*

*an accounting*” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 277). I was unable to access any records from the president’s national associations for this study. However, I was able to access a variety of documents during the interview process. A document was defined as “any written or recorded material *other than a record* that was not prepared specifically in response to a request from the inquirer” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 277). The documents I was able to access or obtain were membership directories, association websites, a booklet for first-year presidential partners, a presidential partner job description, and a training manual for presidential partners.

The most valuable document I had initially was the *AASCU Partner Directory*. It provided me with membership information that included the partner’s name, their partner, the university affiliation, an address, telephone numbers, e-mail address and a photograph. All of the partners were listed alphabetically by their respective state.

Other documents were found in the president’s national association websites. As a non-presidential partner I was able to learn if there were association sub-committees that provided presidential partner support group meetings, mentoring programs, and workshops. Specifically, the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) website was easy to navigate and provided agenda information for their yearly conference and retrospective years.

One document found in the CIC website was *Presidential Spouse 101: My Spouse is a college president—now what do I do?* (Council of Independent Colleges, n.d.). It appeared to have been assembled during 2004 by The CIC Presidents Spouses Task Force. *Presidential Spouse 101* was a mixture of forms, anonymous one-page

testimonials, and photographs. The document was designed to ease the minds of presidential partners by providing hints for entertaining and hosting events. There were chapters for getting organized for college events and contained a range of examples such as check-off lists, schedules, samples of invitations, decorating ideas, and photographs of table decorations and flower arrangements.

In the middle of *Presidential Spouse 101*, amongst the pages that continued to reaffirm the traditional female role expectations, was one page in the chapter titled *Helpful Hints* that had been written by an anonymous male presidential partner. His hints were for the presidential couple to make friends with people who were not associated with the university, to be accustomed to the loneliness, learn the institutional and community culture, and “My advice to the male presidential spouses? Stay out of the way!” (Council of Independent Colleges, n.d.).

I discovered over the months of conducting the research study that the AASCU website had changed dramatically. In 2004 when I initially approached the topic of researching presidential partners, it was possible to review agenda items for the planned annual conference for the university presidential partners; however; in 2006 it was no longer available. In addition, the link to the presidential partner committee was no longer available.

During the interviews five respondents made me aware of three documents that defined the university’s traditional role expectations. These documents were *Insights: A guide for presidents’ and chancellors’ partners, 2001 revised and edited edition* (NASULGC, 2001) training manual; a pamphlet, *First Year Partner on the University*

*Campus* distributed by AASCU (Appleberry, 1992); and, a draft copy of a job description from AASCU *Presidential partner/associate of the president* (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n. d.).

All three documents were not cited in previous research journals or books, or currently available on the respective national president's associations. These materials had previously been distributed to presidential partners through their respective associations.

The last examples of the documents I found during the interviews were letters and newspaper clippings. One presidential partner allowed me to read original letters and newspaper articles that described the presidential partner's efforts at promoting cultural diversity at the university and in the community. I also read the angry and threatening letters by some community member's reactions to the presidential partner's diversity efforts. [OC 117-119]

### *Researcher Reflexivity*

Reflexivity was the process whereby the researcher records thoughts about self and the method being used (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 327). These thoughts were about decisions made about the research being conducted, whether there were parts of the process that need to be changed or altered, and other thoughts reflective of the study and process.

The method to capture such thoughts was to maintain a daily reflexive journal. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described a reflexive journal as three distinct parts:

1. The daily schedule and logistics of the study

2. A personal diary that provides the opportunity for catharsis, for reflection upon what is happening in terms of one's own values and interests, and for speculation about growing insights
3. A methodological log in which methodological decisions and accompanying rationales are recorded (p. 327)

My reflexivity journal helped me organize my thoughts about the respondents, the interviewing process and experiences with gatekeepers. Many times these reflexives reflected my uncertainty about exposing emotionally charged revelations during the interviews. At other times I used the journal to record and review sensitive conversations that took place that would not be presented in the research findings. The journal was used as a retrospective tool to help me develop the methodology, which ensured the confidentiality of the respondents, their family and their institution.

#### *Peer Debriefing*

Peer debriefing was one method to establish credibility in a naturalistic inquiry research study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

It is a process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytical session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind. (p. 308)

Initially it was difficult to find someone who would be helpful as a peer debriefer who had an objective opinion about university presidential partners. Generally people imagined that the university presidential partner was always female and who lived a life of leisure and who possessed no commitments or career. I was able to find someone who provided useful insights. The debriefer was a female friend who works in espionage

research for a federal government agency in Washington, D. C. I knew she was capable of serving as a debriefer because of her research doctorate degrees, her familiarity with qualitative research methods as well as keeping everything confidential. We conducted our talks by telephone. She provided key questions to remind me when I was interpreting too much into conversations that could not be supported with the data such as “When did they say that?” She also asked questions such as “Didn’t you tell me earlier that two men had also had that same experience? Do you see a pattern emerging or is it coincidence?”

The advantage of the debriefer was to keep me focused on the data gathered, to remain objective, and to make me aware of things that I may have overlooked. I knew that my friend had a better understanding of the role expectations of university presidential partners after the debriefing sessions.

#### *Assurances of Confidentiality*

In developing assurances of confidentiality I knew it was imperative to develop a procedure that would protect the identity of the respondents and refrain from identifying specific demographic information such as their ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender.

Presidential partners lead a public life and usually referred to it as “living in a fishbowl.” The presidential partners were concerned that what they said could come back to haunt their partner’s presidential career. Therefore confidentiality of the respondent’s identity, their partner’s identity, the university, and geographical location was essential. For example, one presidential partner agreed to participate in the study

...with the understanding that individual and institutional confidentiality are maintained by methods that also prevent deductive disclosure, I am willing to participate. (E-mail correspondence from respondent, Spring, 2007)

The communication emphasized the extra measures I had taken to ensure the respondents' identity would be kept confidential and that the data findings could not be used as a deductive tool in identifying the respondent.

As I began to formulate the methodology for the creation of aliases I considered the ethnic makeup of the presidential partners. The majority of presidential partners nationwide were White and female. There was an increasing number of White male presidential partners. However, the numbers of ethnic minority female and male presidential partners were significantly small in comparison to Whites. Therefore if I created alias ethnic names to reflect their ethnic diversity and gender such as "Margarita", "Lucias Jaquin," or "Mai Kalaya," the presidential partner's identity would easily be compromised.

Therefore I decided to create aliases that reflected British, Scottish, and Irish female and male names traditionally from the British Isles because the majority of contemporary university presidential partners were White and had surnames such as O'Connell, White, Wright, Long, Murphy, Coleman, Lee, Barker, Ward, and Buchanan. The process ensured that the respondent's ethnic identity and/or cultural background would be kept confidential.

To assign the alias to the respondent I created 15 female and 15 male names. The names had hyphenated last names such as "Wales-Sussex" and others had a middle name such as "Anne Saxon Tudor" and others had no middle names such as "Amanda Astor."

The male names were also created using the same methodology. Each name was written on a small piece of paper and placed in two separate envelopes with “Female Names” or “Male Names” written on the envelopes.

Once I received confirmation that a respondent was willing to participate in the study I obtained the appropriate gender envelope and randomly pulled a name out of the envelope. That alias was then permanently assigned to the respondent throughout the duration of the study. The alias appeared on all documents such as the interview protocol and file folders. The alias key was updated as new respondents were added to the study.

I understood that the gender of the presidential partner was critical to the research study; however, if the gender was tied to their ethnicity, it could compromise the confidentiality of the presidential partner. Therefore I decided I would limit references to the presidential partner’s gender and ethnicity or as a group such as “Latino male” or “Latino males.”

In addition, I decided that when I reported the research finding in *Chapter IV*, I would provide general overall demographic information such as the number of respondents, their gender, and ethnicity in the opening paragraphs only. Later in the context of reporting the findings I would not tie the respondent’s ethnic or cultural group to their gender, institution, and/or geographical location. I anticipated this methodological process would secure assurances of confidentiality.

These methodological procedures were developed to protect the respondent’s identity, their partner, their university and its geographical location. University presidential partnerships were part of a relatively small network. Most presidential

partnerships were affiliated with one to two national presidents' associations. It was a small network. Therefore the degrees of separation based on ethnicity and gender to university president and geographical regions were quite small.

I decided to refer to general categories that described the type of university and not its geographical location. For example, the following general university type categories were created for this purpose.

1. Influential regional university with degree granting programs
2. Major State University
3. Urban University (Y. S. Lincoln, personal conversation, May 12, 2007)

Another circumstance arose testing my confidentiality assurances. During my interviewing sessions, several presidential partners shared stories that were both tragic and comical. For example, sometimes I would be interviewing a presidential partner (i.e. First Lady Jewell) and they would share a story with me that they had experienced because of their gender, sexual orientation, dual career, ethnicity, or positionality. Several weeks later as I was interviewing a different respondent (i.e. First Lady Stanley) located several states away, that respondent would tell me the same story about the presidential partner (First Lady Jewell) but from the respondent's perspective. When I realized that I had heard the same story earlier I knew I could not use it as part of my findings. If I had used that presidential partner's story, their identity would be compromised because of the small network of presidential partners.

Although most presidential partners knew I would follow-up on their suggestions for potential respondents, the presidential partners were gracious not to inquire on my

success in contacting their referrals. Although I would maintain the confidentiality of all respondents I was relieved not to be placed in that uncomfortable position.

### *Member Check*

Member checking was another method for establishing credibility. The process of a member check has several advantages:

1. It provides an opportunity to assess intentionality
2. It gives the respondent an immediate opportunity to correct errors of fact and challenge what are perceived to be wrong interpretations
3. It provides the respondent the opportunity to volunteer additional information
4. It puts the respondent on record as having said certain things and having agreed to the correctness of the investigators' recording of them. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314)

I began the member checking process after each interview. I reminded the respondents that I would be typing up my interview notes and would be sending them a copy for corrections. Most of the respondents preferred to have the interview notes sent to them via e-mail and others preferred that I mail them the interview notes. For the respondents who requested a hardcopy, I included a self-addressed, stamped envelope for their convenience. One-half of the respondents (12) returned corrected copies of the interview notes.

The changes to the interview notes were minor. The presidential partners made minor corrections clarifying their family and career history. A few passages of the information shared during the discussions were deleted because the presidential partner feared the information would compromise their identity. The edited member checked interview notes were used for the data analysis.

After each interview I sent a handwritten note of appreciation to each respondent. Only one was returned due to a faulty address. I sent a new one in its place.

### *Data Analysis*

Content analyses of the data were based on the naturalistic inquiry research and ethnographic research processing described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Spradley (1979). The data analysis was initiated based on the presidential partner's interviews, a variety of documents, field notes and journals. Merriam (1998) observed

Data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity.... Analysis begins with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read. Emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses direct the next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to the refinement or reformulation of questions...It is an interactive process throughout that allows the investigator to produce believable and trustworthy findings.... rigor in a qualitative research derives from the researcher's presence, the nature of the interaction between researcher and respondents, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perceptions, and rich, thick description. (p. 151)

Therefore, the strategy for data analysis was developed as the study progressed. One change that occurred at the beginning of the study was expanding the pool of respondents from 12 to 24. After discussions with committee members, I decided a larger pool of respondents would provide better opportunities to obtain rich, thick descriptions, extensive interpretations of perceptions and triangulation of the data. Triangulation is a "mode of improving the probability that findings and interpretations

will be found credible” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). Therefore, I thought a larger pool would result in additional data (via additional sources or respondents) that would develop into common findings and be verified through the triangulation process. After I explained my rationale, my dissertation chair agreed to the expansion from 12 to 24 respondents.

The analysis was conducted using primary data from the interviews with the respondents and creating units of data and developing a code for each unit of data. The coded units of data were separated into various categories until themes and patterns were identified.

#### *Unitizing the Data*

The process of unitizing the data involved reviewing the information from the interview and identifying bits of information that were relative to the research questions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These bits of information were small or as large as a paragraph but were able to “stand by itself...it must be interpretable in the absence of any additional information other than a broad understanding of the context in which the inquiry is being carried out” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 345)

Therefore after the completion of the member checking process, I took each interview and carefully reviewed the identifying bits and/or sections of information into units of datum. Each interview was re-structured into a Word document. The units of data were arranged sequentially unit by unit. Figure 2 is an example of a numbered sequence of data units.

Depending on the number of data units, some interviews had 30 units of data and other interviews had 150 units of data. A unique number was assigned to each data unit in sequential order from the first interview to the last interview. Therefore the numbering of the units began with “1” and ended with “1257.” The purpose of this unique number coding was to add another layer of respondent confidentiality. For example, a datum unit

153\F4/2007\I did not come with my husband when he was being interviewed. My husband did tell the Regents during the interview about my career as a motivational speaker. The Regents understood that I would be involved in my career and may not be able to attend some college events and they were okay with that.

154\F4/2007\There were times when I could not make an event and my husband would be asked why I wasn't there and he would tell them that I had a conflicting engagement.

FIG. 2. An Illustration of a Numbered Sequence of Data Units. The data unit is numbered sequentially followed by the gender; sequence of interviewee and the year the interview took place.

may be identified as item number 493. That unique number does not provide the reader with any information to determine the identity, ethnicity, regional location, or the specific date of the interview. An example of the data coding process below illustrates the final product before it is placed on unit cards. Notice the sequence of data units, alias code, and the year of the interview.

I replicated the entire process using my journals and observations and my observer's comments. From my observer's comments, there were 412 data units created.

Figure 3 illustrates an observer's data unit in numerical sequence. The methodology was identical to the respondents interview and the data was transformed into data cards, which is discussed in the next section *Coding*.

117\OC9/2007\ As the respondent spoke of her family receiving death threats from a couple of community members, I looked around the room to see whether there were visible safety precautions in the immediate area...

118\OC9/2007\I realized at this point why the house was located in such a secluded area and not easily seen from the main thoroughfare. I would need to follow-up...

FIG. 3. An Illustration of the Observer's Data Units. The units are numbered sequentially followed by the observer's coding associated with the appropriate respondent and the year of the observation.

### *Coding*

Coding the sets of data units was adapted on the methodology of Lincoln and Guba (1985). Each data unit was placed on a 4 x 6 card for sorting later into categories. Each data unit was numbered sequentially from 1 to 1257. The code used to identify each respondent was the "gender" followed by the "rank" in the interview schedule and the "year" the research was conducted.

I debated on whether I should identify the gender of the respondent; however, I knew that I would be exploring gender differences in the presidential partner's role expectations so I included that delineation in the coding of the data units. For example, Figure 4 illustrates that if the 25<sup>th</sup> interview was a male presidential partner, the code

assigned to his data units was M25/2007. This respondent's identification code was located throughout M25's data units at the upper right side corner of the card.

If I decided to use a data unit from M25 who had been assigned the unique number 2121 then the unit card would have "2121" at the top left hand corner. Figure 4 illustrates M25's unit card, number 2121 which was created in 2007.

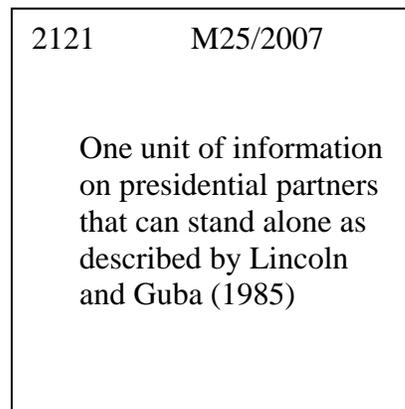


FIG. 4. An Illustration of Data Unit Card.

For my observer's comments cards, the process was identical except that I did not assign the gender. I kept the interviewing sequence the same. I included observations made before, during, and after the interview. Figure 5 illustrates an example of OC unit card number 409.

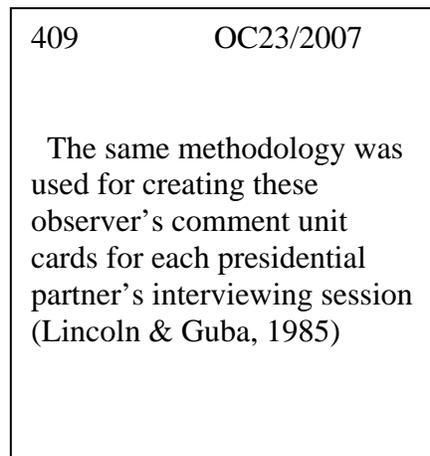


FIG. 5. An Illustration of the Observer's Data Unit Card.

Observe that in Figure 5, the unique number was at the top left hand corner and this was my 409<sup>th</sup> observation in the study. The OC23/2007 designates that this observation belongs to the 23<sup>rd</sup> respondent in the study.

### *Categorizing*

Categorizing the data units was a daunting process. The purpose of categorizing the units was to

... bring together into provisional categories those cards that apparently relate to the same content; to devise rules that describe category properties...to justify the inclusion of each card that remains assigned to the category as well as to provide a basis for later tests of replicability; and to render the category set internally consistent. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 347)

The categorization process was conducted multiple times until patterns emerged. I took each unit card of the 1257 cards and decided what topic or category it fell under. I was advised to seek a large flat surface for sorting so I used my living room floor. I

continued looking at each card and determined if the card belonged in one of the piles or if a new pile should be created. If there were cards that I thought were irrelevant to the piles and the study's research questions, I placed that card in another new pile labeled "miscellaneous." I began the process known as "the method of constant comparison" which means looking at each coded card multiple times and determining which category pile the card should be placed. I conducted multiple times until I thought I had exhausted the process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 347).

Initially each pile was a "yet-to-be-named category" and a label was created with short descriptors of what properties existed in each pile (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 347). For example, one pile appeared to be data units of the respondent's concerns of trying to maintain a professional career and attend some college related functions. As the researcher I considered a common respondent assignment or as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) a term that reflected the "essence of the rule" (p. 348). In this pile I selected the term "dual careers."

As I continued looking through the cards the piles became quite large. I took those cards and examined each card again and determined if there were sub-categories under this main category or if the card belonged in another pile.

In the example provided above, "dual careers," some of these sub-categories became "female" and "male" because I knew that I would be exploring dual career challenges based on gender. Nevertheless the sub-category of "female" remained a large pile and again I reviewed each pile of cards to determine whether the cards remained in

the sub-category of “female,” placed under another pile, or create another sub-category. I continued this process until I felt I had exhausted the process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Following the methodology established by Lincoln and Guba (1985), several themes emerged from the data units. The first attempt at categorizing resulted in a large number of themes as shown in *Appendix H. Preliminary List of Themes*. As I continued to identify subcategories the second list of themes became *Appendix I. Final List of Themes*.

I knew that these themes needed to be explored further because the numbers of cards were still cumbersome. I referred back to the research questions as a guide while

**TABLE 2**

**Categories and Corresponding Coded Data Units**

University support for Presidential Partner

Budget support: 87, 1021, 990, 1063, 1197, 804, 205, 254, 436, 438, 701, 312, 888

Personnel/Staff support: 1156, OC 379, 1147, OC216, OC192, 1247, 580, 583, 581, 609, 973, 68, 65, 67, 85, 115, 117, 116, 140, 156, 157, 160, 166, 165, 169, 185, 226, 202, 287, 285, 284, 289, 329, 330, 331, 363, 395, 532, 533, 70, 758, 698, 699, 998, 997, 914, 1044, 1046, 1045, 1062, 1104, 996, 949, 948, 947, 877, 827, 826, 702, 817

Little or No support: 876, 1105, 582, 437, 499, 504, 759, 700, OC 231

sorting the data unit cards. As I worked with these cards at times I was unsure of where the sorting would take me, therefore I kept records of the units card that appeared under the various categories and sub-categories. As I created the lists I realized that the methodology used had maintained respondent confidentiality. For example, see *Categories and Corresponding Coded Data Units*.

In Table 2, the broad category, *University support for Presidential Partner*, was identified in bold print with three sub-categories: *Budget support*, *Personnel/Staff support*, and *Little or No support*. Each unit of data was the unique numbers listed and the “OC” and a unique number identified the observer’s comments. Emerging themes resulted in a compiled list. Table 3 shows the emergence of themes with written observations of the context found in the data units.

These observations revealed the emerging theme of role conflict and its effects on the university presidential partners. In addition, other role concepts intersected with role conflict in all of the categories. From the initial list of emerging themes of role conflict in Table 3, I expanded the themes with the concept of role theory and in the context of conflicting role expectations that the female and male presidential partners were experiencing. That analysis resulted in Table 4 *Descriptive Themes of the Research Study*.

**TABLE 3****Emerging Themes of Conflict in Role Expectations Experienced by University Presidential Partners**

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1. Dual Careers: Both female and males experienced role conflicts trying to maintain separation of roles or trying to maintain career and support partner.
  2. Class: Very little data collected here. One White presidential partner provided a breakdown of 3 class levels regardless of ethnicity. Women experienced not being accepted by some of their own ethnicity/class in the same community.
  3. Ethnic Minorities: Males do not seem to be affected. The issue appears with the women. Both female and males experienced problems of racial discrimination from Whites. One pretty serious. Women experienced not being accepted by some of their own ethnicity/class in the same community.
  4. Traditional Female Presidential Partner: See breakdown in other categories
  5. Positionality (link to President). Evidence of conflict in role expectations. Affects both female and males with the university and community. Positive and negative examples. Affecting acceptance of roles.
  6. Self-Actualization/Identity Conflict in Roles. Affects both female and males with university, community, and their personal relationships.
  7. Institutional Patriarchy: Conflict in roles for females and males. The type and frequency of demands by university compliance to role expectations are subtle or direct and based on gender.
  8. Sexual Orientation: Not enough interviewed to establish consensus.
  9. Gender: See breakdown in other categories.
  10. National Support Organizations: Programs continue to be designed for the traditional female presidential partner. Non-traditional partners tend not to attend or prefer to set up their own meetings and gatherings.

**TABLE 4****Descriptive Themes of the Research Study****I. Dual Career Issues**

- Female: Conflict with Attending University Events
  - Yes/No University Support from Other Employers
  - National Support Groups
  - Presidential Partner Who had Wanted to be a University President
- Male: Conflict with University Role Expectations
  - Family
  - Yes/No University Support for Career
  - Working at University
  - Dual Careers Commentary
  - National Support Groups
- Compensation/Institutional Support
  - Coping
  - Yes/No University Support for Career
  - Faculty at Same University
  - Family
  - Dichotomy between Career and University Role

**II. Class Issues**

- Female: White
  - African-American
  - Asian
  - Latina
- Male: White
  - African-American

**III. Ethnic Minorities**

- Culture, Ethnicity, Religion
- Harassment/Discrimination (All Female)

**IV. Positionality**

- Female & Male:
  - Influence
  - Political
  - Leadership
  - Community Work
  - Celebrity Status
  - Link to President

**V. Identity**

- Traditional Presidential Partner Female:
  - First Lady Title
  - Presentation of Self
  - Mental Health
  - Adjusting to Role
  - Fishbowl

**TABLE 4, continued****Descriptive Themes of the Research Study**

## V. Identity, continued

## Professional Career Female:

Fishbowl  
 Mental Health  
 No recognition from Husband  
 Adjusting to Role  
 First Lady Title  
 Presentation of Self

Men: Masculinity and Gender Conflict  
 Fishbowl  
 Title

The Next Presidency

## VI. Institutional Patriarchy: Subtle &amp; Direct Demands

## Traditional Female:

University Support  
 Partner's influence in Role Expectations  
 Interview/Role Expectations  
 Identity Issues  
 Presidential House  
 Compensation

## Professional Career Female

University Support  
 Partner's Influence in Role Expectations  
 Traditional Roles Conducted  
 Interview/Role Expectations  
 Self of Independence  
 Presidential House  
 Institutional Pressure  
 Ethnicity

## Male: Attire (Tuxedo)

Household Maintenance  
 Title  
 Masculinity and Gender Conflict  
 Interview/Role Expectations  
 Partner's Influence in Role Expectations  
 Entertaining & Hosting  
 Flirting Females  
 University Support

<b>TABLE 5</b>
<b><u>Themes of the Research Study</u></b>
Theme 1. University Patriarchy
Theme 2. Dual Careers
Theme 3. Positionality and power
Theme 4. Male Role Conflict
Theme 5. Ethnic Minorities
Theme 6. Social Class

Table 5 illustrates the six main themes that were condensed from the previous Table 3 and Table 4 with broader categories. I considered the categories and decided to integrate some categories into other themes. For example, identity was eliminated and moved into various themes and *Professional Career Female* was placed under *Dual Careers*.

These themes merged from the data of the university's role expectations of the presidential partners. These findings were further discussed in *Chapter IV Data Analysis and Results* and *Chapter V Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations*.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

*I took a break from my research analysis to attend neighborhood barbeque. Retired university professors and their partners surrounded me. One of the women asked me about my dissertation topic and I tried to keep it brief. The woman politely smiled and did not respond. The man to my left asked, "So what do you think about Hillary Clinton? Do you think she would make a good president?" I responded, "Of course. She knows more than anyone running what is expected in the job because she has first-hand experience." A woman across from me turned to the man and said, "She's not studying those kinds of presidential wives." The man responded, "Yes, I know that but don't you think that role is similar to the White House wives or other supportive wives?" He looked at me. I smiled and responded, "Actually you're quite right." I hesitated. "Hillary would know what to expect as the president. But Bill Clinton (pause) well, I do not know if he would know what to do as the presidential partner."*

*The people at the table laughed.*

### *Context of This Study*

The context of this study played an important part in analyzing and interpreting the data. As I traveled from one region to another I wrote observations of the communities, university campuses, the presidential residences, the interactions between the respondent and the university and community members. These observations provided contextual data supporting the experiences of the presidential partner and the university and community's role expectations of the presidential partner.

As I prepared for reporting the results of the research study I debated on what information I would provide, while at the same time protecting the identity of the university presidential partners. To provide sufficient clues to assist in the deductive identification of a university presidential partner would have been irresponsible and harmful to the career and perhaps to the marriage and/or domestic union of the university presidential couple.

Therefore traditional demographic information on the 24 respondents such as campus information, gender tied to age and ethnicity, marital status, years as a presidential partner, type of career and employer information and other personal information were not provided to protect the identities of the research respondents.

The three types of universities, descriptors of the presidential houses and selective information about the respondents (employment and family) contributed to the context of the study.

### *Types of Universities*

The 24 presidential partners were from three different types of universities. These twenty-four universities stretched from the East to the West coast. There were nine (9) that were considered major state universities, eight (8) that were influential regional universities with degree granting programs, and seven (7) that were urban universities.

The university's geographical region played a significant role in the university and community's role expectations of the presidential partner. Fain (2007) stated that a university in the South or Midwest or in recognized conservative states were more socially and religiously conservative than universities in urban communities. The universities located in socially conservative states demonstrated its expectation that the presidential partner would perform the traditional university roles.

As one of the respondents's observed, "*The previous presidential spouse had been very traditional. The community and the college assumed that I would continue to be a traditional spouse and do the dinners and entertaining. They even asked me what my visions were going to be.*" [214-215]

### *The Presidential House*

When I spoke to acquaintances about visiting the presidential houses many corrected me and told me the houses were "The president's mansion." [OC 410] I had forgotten that people used that term. The term *mansion* conveyed an image of privilege and stature. Such an image is what Goffman (1966) referred to as a "setting" for a "performance" (p. 201). Goffman discussed settings for presentations and performances

that included people. Presentation meant how a person behaved and dressed in different circumstances. Presentation described how a room was organized and decorated. A house and its surroundings were part of the setting for a presentation or performance.

In the example of a university, the university president's mansion or house was the setting for the performance by the presidential couple in entertaining and hosting university guests.

Goffman discussed presentation bias and the production of a "front." The university's presidential house was designed to convey the respect and power of the president's office by providing a home fit for its leader. The university provided the presidential house (or mansion) for the president and their partner to perform their roles of cultivating future donors and hosting university guests, students, faculty, and staff. For the performance to be successful the setting (President's house) had to project and support the image of prestige and stature of a university president.

The additional settings or props were the furnishings in the house, the physical layout of the rooms, and the other accessories needed to set the stage before the performance would begin. The performances in the example were the dinners, receptions, tours, meetings and other events held in the house and hosted by the university president and/or their partner. The presidential couple's manner and behavior contributed to their performance during the events. The other props such as attire and ceremony were essential to the performance between the presidential couple and university guests (Goffman, 1966).

Two types of presidential houses were described below using Goffman's (1966) discussion of the setting (Presidential mansion or house): the front (behavior and manner specific to hosting and entertaining), and the presentation (elegantly decorated tables, flowers, wait staff) in preparation for the performance of the presidential couple and the guests. The descriptions of the houses affirm Goffman on the importance of making a lasting impression to the university guests of the stature, power, and prestige of its presidential family.

*The Presidential Houses in this Study.* Since the 1950s fewer presidential houses were built for the university president and family (Greenberg, 2007). Traditionally, the presidential families resided on campus in the President's House. If the university did not own a presidential house, the presidential family lived in privately owned homes. In the study, 10 of the 24 university's presidential families lived on campus in the university's President's House.

The presidential families that lived in the presidential house conducted several of the traditional role expectations because the house was designed and provided for college-related entertaining. The most common activities were to open the house for alumni, parents, and organizations for special occasions. The university presidential house was used for entertaining donors, faculty, students, staff, and other guests of the university. There were differences in role expectations on the upkeep of the house based on the gender of the presidential partner.

Fourteen of the presidential families in the study owned their own homes. Eleven of the privately owned homes were used for entertaining donors, faculty, students, staff, and other guests of the university.

Three privately owned homes were not used for university-related events. These three presidential partners were not interested in performing any of the university's traditional role expectations. Instead, their partner's staff used the university facilities for college related events.

The presidential houses were presented in greater detail and demonstrate how both types of houses contributed toward the context of the study and contributed to the university's role expectations of the female and male presidential partners.

*University President's House.* The university president's house was provided for the presidential family usually at no cost. Its close proximity to the main campus allowed some presidents to walk to their office or use a golf cart. Some presidential houses were located close to other campus facilities such as the administration buildings and athletic fields.

In sharp contrast other presidential houses were set regally on a hillside overlooking the campus. Although the houses were designed for the president's family they were used for entertaining and hosting faculty, students, staff, Board of Regents, alumni, and other guests of the university. The university maintained the house, provided a housekeeper and provided additional personnel when events were held at the house. After visiting several presidential homes I found there were common characteristics such as the design of the house, the grounds, floor plans, and decorating.

House Design, Exterior and Interior Maintenance. There were several presidential houses that were similar in design. The most popular presidential home design was the Classic Revival with the red brick, four to six white columns in front, and black shutters. There were two houses that represented the stylistic element of the Victorian era. One third of the presidential houses were constructed of masonry and the other third were a mixture of wood and masonry. Two presidential houses were registered with the *National Register of Historic Places* because of their historical significance.

Whenever I visited the presidential house there were grounds people trimming trees, raking leaves, clearing snow from sidewalks, planting flowers and performing other daily maintenance on the grounds. The maintenance staff was responsible for setting up and taking down appropriate furnishings (tents, tables, chairs, air conditioning units, etc) for all college-related events. However I learned that the presidential partner (female) and the housekeeper were responsible for smaller parties and had to set up the tables, chairs, linens, etc.

The interior maintenance of the house varied. Housekeepers were provided to maintain the house and had a flexible schedule in case they were needed at night or weekends for college-related events held in the house. Some housekeepers wore uniforms and others did not. I observed six African American female housekeepers, one Latina housekeeper, and one Asian female housekeeper.

The number of housekeepers depended on several factors: the size of the house, the needs of the presidential family such as the dual career presidential family, and the

gender of the presidential partner. The universities provided housekeepers who cooked meals, cleaned, ran errands and tended to laundry usually when the presidential partners were male and the presidential partners worked full-time. I learned that most of the housekeepers did not cook, tend to laundry or run errands when the presidential partners were female, regardless of their employment status.

The age of the presidential house also played a factor in upkeep. The presidential houses were designed to accommodate the family, guests, meetings and entertaining. Several of the older houses had been through extensive renovations to introduce kitchens, indoor plumbing, air conditioning, electricity, technology and additional parlors to make it more conducive for entertaining and holding meetings.

I observed two older presidential homes that needed paint, carpet, and curtains. Signs of the house settling were visible with cracks in the walls and in the corners of the room. One presidential partner stated that the university would not provide funds for renovations. The other presidential houses observed were updated, i.e. new drapes, paint, furniture, carpet, appliances, and bathroom fixtures.

*Floor Plans.* All of the presidential houses varied in the number of public access rooms such as parlors, libraries, and living rooms. Three houses had a grand salon that featured a grand piano and one salon was so large that it had two grand pianos. There were always one to two public bathrooms depending on the size of the first floor.

In the houses indicative of the Classic Revival design, the grand staircases were the focal point after entering through the front door. Two presidential houses had the

stairway located away from public view. Traditionally the social events took place on the first floor and the private family quarters were on the second floor.

I observed two presidential houses that had a basement. Usually the basements were finished and rooms were used for various functions such as meetings, catered functions, and storage. One of my interviews took place in a basement.

*Interior Decorating.* Seven of the ten houses had all the furnishings provided by the university. In the following observation the presidential family purchased their own furniture demonstrating that each university operated differently. “*When we arrived, the university provided this house for us. The only difference is that all of the furnishings in this presidential house are ours not the university.*” [760]

The other presidential families kept their personal furniture either in the presidential house or elsewhere. Three universities in the study had an inventory of stored furnishings that the presidential partner used to decorate the house according to their tastes, the holidays and seasons.

The furnishings in the presidential houses were exquisite. Many of the furnishings had a story associated with the history of the university and the generosity of its donors. Original artwork graced the walls. Delicate figurines, large statutes and other decorative accents were placed strategically on various tables and hallways around the house. Large fresh floral arrangements were the focal point in many entry foyers and parlors.

Furniture and decorating accessories in the presidential houses varied from native and international antiques in multiple parlors to tasteful contemporary furniture in the

meeting rooms. There was one formal living room where I dared not sit on the delicate Eastlake chair for fear of breaking it. I picked the American Empire era settee instead.

I learned that two female presidential partners had no funds for decorating and would display artwork from the students, faculty and staff to brighten up the parlors. Four female presidential partners used their personal funds to purchase decorative accessories and floral arrangements for the university house. *“There are some events we are asked to participate such as the house tours and we have to pay for decorating out of our personal funds rather than through the university or sponsors. It would be nice if the college could cover things that we are asked to sponsor or participate in—only if we are asked because we represent the university.”* [206-207]

The male presidential partners were not worried about the upkeep of the presidential house. *“As far as the house, they tell me not to do anything. I try to fix something and they stop me. (Chuckling) They say they can get someone to come fix whatever needs to be fixed.”* [531]

*Privately Owned Presidential Houses.* The privately owned presidential houses were more than the family home. The houses were used for entertaining faculty, students, staff, Regents, alumni, donors and other guests of the university. In the study, nine of the fourteen universities provided the president with a housing allowance that included a housekeeper, lawn maintenance, and other services needed to maintain the house. The upkeep of the house communicated to the public the stature, power and prestige of a university president. There were two apartments I was unable to observe.

After visiting the presidential houses I found there were common characteristics such as the location of the house from the university main campus, landscaped grounds, floor plans, and decorating. As I observed the privately owned houses, it reminded me of Gorman (1966) and his discussion on the importance of presentation, the setting, the props, and the performance that occurs in such grandeur settings.

*Location from Campus.* The privately owned house locations ranged from five to twenty miles from the university campus. The lawns were attractively landscaped and maintained. The houses had unique exterior designs that ranged from Victorian era to contemporary to California Spanish style. Nine of the houses were two-story structures. The houses had spectacular views of regional landscapes (sloping hills, meadows, forest, and mountains), swimming pools, or bodies of water such as lakes and rivers. The houses were located in exclusive upper class neighborhoods and ranged in the \$400,000 to \$1 million categories. The houses were located in secluded areas including four gated communities. These gated communities were accessible either through a security code or had security guards at the gate. One house located in an urban community was in a crowded residential area but was nevertheless quite majestic in size and design.

*Floor Plans or Physical Layout.* Seven of the privately owned houses had been built in the last two years. The houses were located in residential neighborhoods with limited parking. The houses were designed and constructed or renovated with entertaining in mind so the main parlors were large, open spaces.

Guests entered from the front entrance into large open rooms with plenty of seating and open spaces that were capable of being converted for sit-down dinners. The

physical layout of the house allowed guests to flow between the kitchen, living and dining areas, additional parlors, and/or libraries with easy access to the courtyard, balcony, and/or pool. In the newer homes the master bedrooms were located downstairs and the other bedrooms were located upstairs. There were one to two guest bathrooms on the main floor.

Some presidential partners had storage rooms added adjacent to the kitchen and/or garage to accommodate the banquet tables and chairs, linens, serving utensils, platters, additional cold storage units and other items for university related entertaining. If a storage room was not available the garage was used. I learned that storing the items made it easier for the maintenance people and caterers to set-up and take down. It saved time and cost for the university.

*Interior Decorating.* The interior decorating was either accomplished by the presidential partner and/or with the assistance of an interior decorator. Regardless, the decorating of the houses was tasteful and elegant. Decorating accents included large comfortable pieces of furniture, terrazzo tile, hand-planed wood floors, and floor to ceiling built-in wood bookshelves and/or windows, original art, and large dramatic greenery. Attention to details ranged from dramatic chandeliers, stairway banisters, and the tiled kitchen islands to the choice of hand towels in the guest bathrooms. No clutter or dust. All of the homes presented an inviting, comfortable, and serene atmosphere.

*Maintenance.* Maintenance for the house differed from state to state. Some universities provided staff to maintain the grounds, fixed things around the house, and provided for a housekeeper. University staff handled all set-ups; take down, and clean up

for college events. The housekeeper was either a university employee or a contract worker.

Three universities had recently changed their housing/maintenance policies and provided funds for the female presidential partner to interview, hire, supervise, pay, and report the wages for the housekeeper. I was not aware if any of the male presidential partners had this responsibility but I learned that being responsible for advertising, interviewing, checking references, hiring, supervising, and paying the housekeeper was a great burden for the female presidential partners. *“I would prefer that the university provide the full-time housekeeper rather than providing us with the funds to hire our own. It just takes a lot of my time in hiring, supervising, and maintaining all the paperwork associated with being responsible for a contract employee.”* [1197] This particular presidential partner had a full-time faculty position with research and grants responsibilities and dedicated her nights and weekends to performing the university’s role expectations of hosting, entertaining and fund-raising.

#### *The University Presidential Partners*

The research findings were based on 24 respondents. General demographics, employment status, and role expectations based on gender were gathered through interview and observation.

*Select Demographics.* The respondents were selected based on purposive sampling methods. There were eighteen women and six men as respondents. American generic names were randomly assigned to each respondent. (See *Chapter III Methodology* for details on alias development and procedures). Table 6 lists the twenty-

four respondents in the study with the university description. Fifteen respondents were White, three were African-Americans, four were Latinas, and two were Asian Americans. There were four interracial heterosexual partnerships and one same sex partnership.

**TABLE 6**  
**Ranking List of Respondents and University**

Number	Alias	University Description
1	Hancock, Amy	Major State University
2	Reynolds, Edward Lincoln	Major State University
3	Turner-Williams, Susan	Urban University
4	Crawford, Karen JoAnne	Influential Regional University
5	Hunt, Patricia Ann	Influential Regional University
6	Marrs, Marsha	Major State University
7	Bush, Melanie Taylor	Urban University
8	O'Brien, William J.	Urban University
9	Jewell, Darcy	Influential Regional University
10	Bonner-Smith, Chad	Urban University
11	Jones-Windsor, Elizabeth	Major State University
12	Winston-Hurst, Melissa	Urban University
13	Tennyson, Tiffany Ann	Influential Regional University
14	Sandhurst, Clare P.	Major State University
15	Avery, Helen T.	Influential Regional University
16	Cotton-Thomas, Jill	Major State University
17	Taylor, Joseph G.	Urban University
18	Hanley, Moira J.	Major State University
19	Prescott, Charles K.	Influential Regional University
20	Potter, Diane	Major State University
21	Bond, Carol Anne	Major State University
22	Newell-Cabot, Catherine	Urban University
23	Stanley, Rebecca	Influential Regional University
24	Calder, Thurston Hyde	Influential Regional University

To protect the respondent's identity no information on their partner, university and family was linked to the aliases on Table 6.

Fifteen of the presidential partners interviewed were at their first presidency as the presidential partner. Seven presidential partners were at their second presidency, and two partners at their third presidency. Twenty-two presidential families moved great distances for the presidency and as a result the partners had to seek employment and adjust to a new community without family or friends nearby. Family and friends were significant because of the comments I received on the loneliness and isolation that many presidential partners experienced, regardless of gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

*Employment Status and Dual Careers.* In the literature on university presidential partners, the concept of "dual career" takes on several meanings. DiBiaggio (1984), a presidential partner, observed that for presidential partners "dual careers" had three different meanings. Dual-career or "two-person career," meant that the couple worked together on one career, the president's career. The Regents traditionally expected the "two-person career" concept, which was also referred to as the "two for the price of one" (DiBiaggio, 1984, p. 111). One presidential partner in the study embraced the "two-person" career, *"I used to have a professional career before my husband became a university president but I decided that my number one role now is being the best ambassador for the university that I can be."* [691]

DiBiaggio (1984) defined a second definition of dual career as when both partners tried to maintain separate and independent careers. "The partner does *not*

engage in the duties and responsibilities ordinarily associated with the role of the wife of a university president” (p. 111).

On the surface it would appear that there were presidential partners in the study who believed they maintained independent and separate careers; however, it became evident as the interviews continued that the presidential partners were expected by the university to attend college related functions with the president, assist the president with fundraising, and serve as a host or hostess. Therefore it appeared that few if any respondents were able to “maintain separate and independent careers.”

The third definition was the “duo-career” when the presidential partner tried to maintain their own professional career and support their partner’s career simultaneously. (DiBiaggio, 1984, p. 111). DiBiaggio identified the “two-person” single career or the “2 for the price of 1” as the career path university presidential partnerships chose at the time of her study.

In this study, 15 of the 24 presidential partners were employed on a full-time or part-time basis. In comparing DiBaggio’s study to this study it appears that the “duo-career” presidential couple has replaced DiBaggio’s “two-person career.”

The following examples demonstrated the duo-career presidential partnerships and their perspectives, one of conflict as a presidential partner and the other of conformity, respectively.

A full-time businesswoman and presidential partner in the study commented, “*I didn’t feel any pressure from my husband but we did sometimes have discussions when*

*conflicts would occur between my career activities and college events he thought I should attend.” [150]*

A full-time employed male presidential partner’s perspective in the study was, *“My role is to help the donors feel comfortable on campus and at events. It is mostly social interaction. We have always been sensitive to the expectations by the college especially in fund-raising where traditionally the partner is expected.” [1215-1216]*

Female presidential partners who tried to maintain a duo-career experienced conflict with their professional career and the university’s role expectations. In the study there were two female presidential partners who went from a full-time professional career to part-time careers. One presidential partner had started her own business and had to reduce her work hours because of the work demands associated with being the presidential partner, *“As my university events took more of my time, I took less and less clients.” [642]*

The other female presidential partner who had a full-time professional career and reduced her hours stated, *“I worked full-time in my profession ...but I decided to maintain my profession on a part-time basis ...I maintain my career because I want to serve as a role model to our female students that they, too, can aspire to earn a professional career. In addition, I am supportive of my husband and the university’s vision. The university allows me to pursue my career and I work at trying to strike a balance.” [322-325]* Therefore, the presidential partner decided to support their partner by conforming to the university’s role expectations.

Based on the DiBiaggio (1984) descriptions of dual careers, the information on the presidential partner's employment status was not absolute because all of the presidential partners were expected to perform some of the university's role expectations.

The employment status of the presidential partner was represented in Table 7 with full-time (FT), part-time (PT), retired, and not employed outside the home.

Rank	Alias	FT	PT	Retired	Not employed outside the home
1	Hancock, Amy	X			
2	Reynolds, Edward Lincoln			X	
3	Turner-Williams, Susan	X			
4	Crawford, Karen JoAnne	X			
5	Hunt, Patricia Ann	X			
6	Marrs, Marsha			X	
7	Bush, Melanie Taylor		X		
8	O'Brien, William J.				X
9	Jewell, Darcy	X			
10	Bonner-Smith, Chad		X	X	
11	Jones-Windsor, Elizabeth	X			
12	Winston-Hurst, Melissa		X		
13	Tennyson, Tiffany Ann				X
14	Sandhurst, Clare P.				X
15	Avery, Helen T.	X			
16	Cotton-Thomas, Jill				X
17	Taylor, Joseph G.	X			
18	Hanley, Moira J.				X
19	Prescott, Charles K.		X	X	
20	Potter, Diane	X			
21	Bond, Carol Anne	X			
22	Newell-Cabot, Catherine				X
23	Stanley, Rebecca	X			
24	Calder, Thurston Hyde	X			

*Not Employed Outside the Home.* There were six presidential partners who were not employed outside the home. In addition, four of the presidential partners had retired either before or shortly after the partner became the university president. Two of the retirees occasionally taught at the university where their partner was president or at a neighboring university.

There were three presidential partners who were seeking employment at the time the study was conducted. Two of the three presidential partners identified the university's policy on conflict of interest or nepotism as reasons why they were not employed at the same university as their partner.

*Employment Outside the Home.* Table 7 identified 12 presidential partners who were employed on a full-time basis (FT). Nine presidential partners were employed on a full-time basis in educational settings and three were white-collar career professionals. With the inclusion of the three presidential partners seeking employment at the time of the study, there were 87.5% of the presidential partners employed or seeking employment.

During the interview the presidential partners revealed their reasons for maintaining a full-time career: financial security. One presidential partner stated, "*Years ago when I first became a presidential partner, I continued with my career but I articulated the need for supporting professional careers because if something should happen to the president (death or divorce) how will the partner (widowed/divorced) support themselves afterwards? They have been out of the job market for those years as*

*a presidential partner and they have not earned any income or contributed to a retirement fund.” [257]*

During the study I heard stories of death and divorce. One respondent stated, *“I have heard of other presidential partners that have had stipulations placed in their husband’s contract that if he should die while in office, she would be given time to find another place of residence so she wouldn’t be kicked out immediately because she was not an employee of the university.” [386]*

A presidential partner, a mother with children still at home, saw her career as a form of financial security. *“With three children under the age 18, I needed to be realistic. I need to have financial security. Hopefully nothing would happen to my husband but if it did ... I just can’t risk being unemployed. I wasn’t willing to give up that financial security for the family.” [1043]*

Four presidential partners were employed at their partner’s university as faculty. Two of the faculty positions had been negotiated during the presidential selection interviewing process and the other two positions were negotiated years after the president had been hired.

One respondent explained that before their partner had started seeking a presidency they had discussed and agreed on the importance of supporting the presidential partner’s professional career. The presidential partner, a tenured faculty, explained, *“...when my husband was approached for this position, he had made it clear that this was a partnership marriage. It was a condition of his being hired that I would be given a tenured full-time position because that was what I would be giving up at our*

*previous university if we came. If they could not do that, then we could not consider accepting the presidency.” [1042]*

Four presidential partners had part-time (PT) employment. Two presidential partners were retired professors and taught classes occasionally, *“I am carving out a role for myself. I do a little part-time teaching. I have a small group of students here and also at another campus.” [526]* The other two presidential partners worked part-time in non-academic settings.

*Family First.* All presidential partners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, identified their family as being their first priority. As one presidential partner stated who decided not to perform any of the role expectations, *“I decided that I would concentrate on my family....” [1077]*

There were five female presidential partners interviewed who had children at home (K-12). The male presidential partners interviewed did not have children at home. The respondents mentioned the opportunities their children had in meeting famous guests of the university. One presidential partner remarked, *“I have the opportunity to meet some famous people like [Colin Powell or Rudy Giuliani]. It gives my children an opportunity to meet them as well. My son was so nervous when he met [Colin Powell or Rudy Giuliani] that his hands shook.” [193]*

The presidential partner was the primary caregiver for the family. Many times the president was away on business and unable to spend time with the family, *“He was unable to have dinner with us for the entire month of October. When that happened I*

*asked his secretary to pencil us in for dinner. He was booked solid until Thanksgiving.”*  
[191]

The university's traditional role expectations ignored the family dynamics of the president. Role overload described the context of the presidential partner faced with multiple expectations from working full-time and performing the university's role expectations, to taking care of the children. With the president's schedule the entire childcare responsibilities fell on the presidential partner. The female presidential partners had a ready list of babysitters for last minute university events. Two presidential partner's relatives moved from their homes to be closer and help the presidential partner with the children.

There were two presidential partners whose children were no longer at home. They stated that when their partners became president it was decided that the presidential partner would remain behind until their child graduated from high school.

During the interviews one presidential partner reflected on their journey as the presidential couple and talked about the importance of family. *“It was rough the years when we were apart and it's gotten better when I moved here. Sometimes it was more important to have someone around who can provide some comfort and support.... I guess my main concern would be if there were kids at home. Family is important to me. I would be concerned about trying to maintain a family relationship. It's important that someone pay attention to the family dynamics.”* [556, 562-563]

There were two presidential partners who discussed their living arrangements when one partner lived in one state and the other lived in another state. In one family, the

children stayed with the female presidential partner who also had an executive position. In the other family, the child stayed with the male presidential partner.

Other examples of family responsibilities included grandchildren. Five of the presidential partners assisted with their grandchildren in addition to performing the traditional role expectations, i.e. *“When the researcher had called earlier, there were children voices in the background and later it was revealed that the respondent (employed full-time) had been taking care of her grandchildren.”* [OC 45] Another presidential partner was absent for two weeks to help with the grandchildren. *“When our grandchild was born I was able to take off for two weeks to help.”* [887]

Five presidential partners revealed that they were primarily responsible for looking after their elderly parents and/or in-laws, *“I, like other baby-boomers, have a mother to take care of and we have had her moved to a nearby facility where I can visit her almost daily whenever possible.”* [987]

Presidential partners sometimes found themselves caring for students as well. Earlier in *Chapter II Literature Review*, Chance-Reay (1999) provided biographies of frontier female presidential partners in the 1800s who were responsible for cooking for the university students, and at times allowed students to live with the presidential family. I was surprised that some things had not changed in over a hundred years. For example, one of my respondents shared one experience when she unexpectedly had students living with them for a semester. *“In fact, we even hosted 2 young students. They lived here and would bring their friends. They would even walk our dog as a way to meet the girls. That was an interesting semester. (Laughing).”* [878]

After taking care of the children or relatives needing care, and/or helping with the grandchildren many of the presidential partners were overwhelmed. *“I must admit that it has been challenging to balance everything from the job, family, and the presidential partner role.”* [1035]

Adapting to family, career, and the university’s role expectations, the presidential partners consulted with their partners and decided how they, the presidential couple, wanted to conduct their presidency. The decisions varied. For the partner who decided not to work outside the home, *“We decided that I would become involved with the community and university.”* [807] The decision reflected an adaptation from role conflict and malintegration to a role of conformity to the university’s role expectations.

For the presidential partners who were employed outside the home, they developed a prioritized events code that helped determine the necessity of their attendance at college events. *“As a result of my career obligations and the number of events she had to attend, we came up with three categories: One, absolutely need to be there; Two, I’d like you to be there but it’s optional; and, Three was totally optional.”* [379] From this example, it was clear that the presidential couple identified how they compromised the university’s role expectations of the partner and still maintained the partner’s career.

In summary, the university’s role expectations of the presidential partner were shaped by a variety of conditions. These conditions were shaped within the context of the university and community’s patriarchal culture, the roles performed by the previous presidential partners, and the availability of university presidential houses or privately

owned houses. Regardless of the presidential partner's professional career, the university and community expected the presidential partner to perform university work.

### *Research Questions*

The research questions provided results from eighteen female presidential partners and six male presidential partners and their experiences with the university's traditional role expectations. The questions were designed to learn how presidential partners were influenced by the university's traditional role expectations. The goals of the research questions were to gather rich descriptive data. In addition, the research questions were designed to examine select factors (ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, positionality, patriarchy) of the female and male presidential partners and how these factors intersected with the university's traditional role expectations. Additional research findings were presented in *Chapter IV* under *Additional Research Findings*.

#### *Research Question 1*

What are the traditional role expectations that presidential partners are expected to perform?

The traditional role expectations that presidential partners were expected to perform were based on the university's patriarchal assumption that the presidential partner was female, did not work outside the home, and would support her husband by performing various tasks without compensation. During the interviewing process a document, a job description, *Presidential Partner/Associate of the President*

(Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n. d.), was obtained. A copy of the job description is available in Appendix A. The job description provided a detailed description of the traditional role expectations. The primary role expectations were summarized.

Provide institutional and presidential social support, University outreach and public relations activities, volunteer contributions to campus and the community, and involvement with student, faculty and staff in support of the University mission. Basic functions and scope of responsibilities include (1) organizing, hosting and participating in social functions supporting the University and official University events, both on and off campus; (2) campus involvement with, and support of, faculty, staff and students; (3) overseeing the official University residence; (4) representing the University to external constituencies; (5) community involvement and leadership; and (6) professional development activities relevant to the formal spousal role (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n. d., p.1).

The job description continued with detailed explanations of the expectations which included making public appearances representing the university and the president, making public speeches, taking an active part in fundraising for the university, recruiting students, and giving tours of the campus and Presidential House.

The study showed that changes were being made to the traditional role expectations because of the increase of male presidential partners and dual career partnerships. For further discussion on these changes in role expectations, please refer to the findings in *Research Question 3*.

#### *Research Question 2*

How are the university presidential partners influenced to perform the university's traditional role expectations?

There were two main factors that influenced the presidential partner's decision in performing the university's traditional role expectations. These two factors were the patriarchal cultures of the university and the community culture. Figure 6 illustrates the components that were part of the university patriarchal influences and community culture.

*The University Patriarchal Culture.* The university's patriarchal culture includes various populations in the university system. Figure 6 shows different agents under the University and the campus community such as the Regents, university policy, staff, administrative and executive staff, students, faculty, retirees and alumni.

The other factors in the university's patriarchal culture were the presence of a university owned presidential house and the history of previous presidential partners. If previous presidential partners had been active in performing the traditional role expectations then it created expectations that the next presidential partner would perform the role expectations as well. However if the university had a history of the previous presidential partners being employed outside the home or the absence of a female presidential partner, precedence had been established and the presidential partner had the option to decide their employment status and level of university work.

The university's patriarchal culture had a significant influence on the presidential partner's performance of the university's traditional role expectations. Four out of twenty-four presidential partners stated that they received ambiguous information from the Regents about their expectations for the presidential partner.

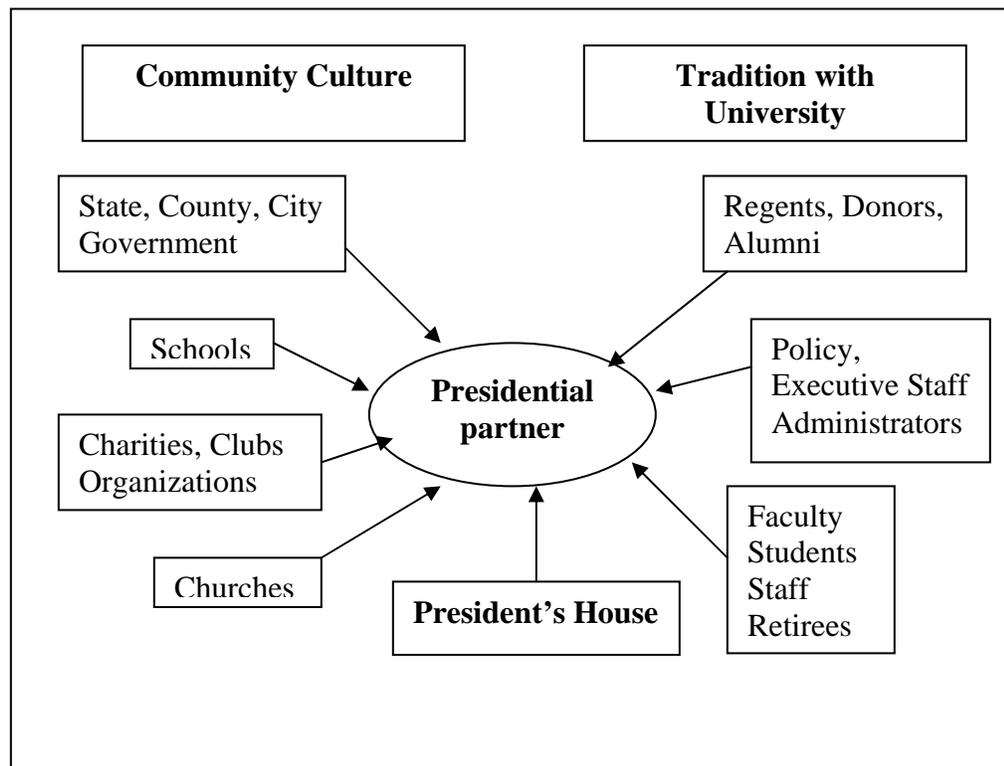


FIG. 6. Three Factors that Influence the Presidential Partner. The patriarchal university and the community culture have expectations of what traditional roles the university presidential partners should perform.

The following discussion will illustrate the various factors associated with the university and community patriarchal structure and the different methods used by the Regents and others to convey the university's role expectations to the presidential couple.

*The Regents and Administrative Policy.* The presidential search interviewing committees were not the initial population who influenced the presidential partner into performing the traditional role expectations. Research findings showed that the Regents

initially and later others communicated the university's traditional role expectations to the presidential partner.

The communication between the presidential partner and the university Regents varied from institution to institution. Some of the Regents were direct and other Regents would not discuss the role expectations until after the president was hired. In this study, the Regents spoke with the presidential candidate or spoke indirectly with the presidential couple but never directly with the presidential couple. Below are examples of the various methods communicated from the university representative to the presidential partners. Observe the comments that reflected an expectation of conformity to the role expectations.

The first example was direct communication via policy. *"The system does have policies in place that clearly mention role expectations for the presidential partner such as assisting with entertaining, conducting community service, and making board commitments."* [1096]

Another presidential partner, who was employed full-time, received specific questions from the Regents. *"In the first presidency I was asked direct questions on my interest in being involved, if I was supportive of my husband and if I would be able to help him, and whether my work would affect his role."* [636]

Following are examples of indirect or implied communications to the presidential partner. *"The first university gave me a list of events I would need to attend or host such as a ladies tea, luncheon, receptions for the retirees, and various other events at the president's house. That was it."* [715]

*“We were new to the area and I did not know anyone and so I spent a lot of time trying to learn people’s names and what departments they represented. So I did as I was told.” [278]*

In this observation, the presidential partner learned about the university’s role expectations after the presidential partners were hired. *“We were hired because of our accomplishments at the previous university and therefore they have high hopes and are very supportive.” [712]*

One presidential partner was publicly praised for her university work by the head of the university system in an official public setting that I was able to observe. At the dinner function the *“speaker [System head] stated that he learned during the interviewing process how involved the [respondent] had been as the First Lady in their previous university. Speaker stated that the [respondent’s] work as the First Lady made her husband a better choice over the other candidates.” [OC 189-190]*

There were conversations by university personnel with the presidential partner about expectations to conform to the traditional role expectations. The presidential partners who initially were informed by the Regents that they were not expected to perform any of the traditional role expectations experienced a different message shortly after the president took office. *“I could be as traditional or career-oriented as I wanted to be. But it became implicit that I attend university events as the presidential partner. Implicit by people asking my husband, ‘Where is she?’, ‘Why isn’t she here?’, ‘Where’s Susan?’” [106-107]*

On other occasions the Regents, alumni, and donors would repeatedly question the president on why the presidential partner was not in attendance and the president would in turn pressure the partner. *“My husband feels that since the university provides us with a good livelihood, that I owed it something back like doing more for the university as the presidential partner.”* [23]

All the respondents reported that the Regents expected the presidential partner, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, to accompany the president to college events, entertain and host events, and assist with fundraising. Some universities restricted the presidential partner’s fundraising efforts exclusively to the university. Other universities encouraged the presidential partner to work with community organizations because these organizations served as a financial resource for the university.

Presidential partners based their success on achieving financial support for the university students and/or support from the community. For example, one respondent in the study stated, *“My other interests have been in breast cancer research and raising money for women athletes. So far we have raised money for both and even created an annual black tie fundraising event for the female athletes.”* [766]

In another example, a presidential partner was made aware that her fundraising efforts were primarily for the university. Therefore the presidential partner initiated a fundraising project that involved the female alumni. *“I was the founding member of a woman’s charitable organization. The purpose was to encourage women to give philanthropic gifts...to the university.”* [765]

The final two examples illustrated the existence of a patriarchal structure. The first example illustrated a conversation between the Regents and the male presidential candidate as they negotiated the presidential partner's future role as First Lady. "*It was insinuated .... They would ask my husband 'Is your wife willing to do these things?'*" [686]

The second example demonstrated the Regents speaking with the male presidential partner instead of the female presidential candidate. "*Actually it was brought up in a round about way. They asked me if I would be comfortable with hosting events and since I was used to it, of course I didn't mind.*" [63] In both examples the Regents spoke with the men. One male partner (president) assured the Regents of his partner's conformity to the role expectations and in the second example the male presidential partner was negotiating his own conformity. The Regents, demonstrating the existence of a patriarchal structure, never consulted the women in either example.

*The College Campus Community.* Presidential partners were influenced by comments of support and admiration made by the faculty, staff and students. At other times, the presidential partners were questioned by these same people on why the presidential partner was not participating in an event or not attending a function.

During one of my campus visits, several faculty and staff told me that the presidential partner was quite active on campus. The faculty spoke with enthusiasm and pride that the "First Lady" had attended their departmental functions [OC 80].

Faculty and staff were verbal in their appreciation of the presidential partner. Many presidential partners mentioned how receptive students, retirees, and faculty were

when they were invited to the president's house or when the presidential partner attended one of their athletic events. The faculty expressed their appreciation when the presidential partner spearheaded projects for them and the retired faculty. These positive responses by the students encouraged the presidential partner to continue with their university roles. *"I like to keep my university roles focused on the needs of the students and university.... For example, I serve on the campus climate committee and we have been working on bringing bike racks to campus which is something students want."* [693]

At another university some of the faculty mentioned working with the presidential partner's outreach projects. It was the first time faculty had been asked to lead a public discussion on their research interests. The faculty's positive response encouraged the presidential partner to create an educational community forum. The presidential partner stated, *"I wanted to provide an opportunity for the community to recognize our outstanding faculty and learn of the wonderful educational and research opportunities this university provides. Our faculty was excited to speak about their research on current topics of community interest."* [333]

The alumni groups contributed to influencing the presidential partner in performing university work. The alumni groups invited the presidential partner to attend their regional meetings and other gatherings. Alumni represented former students and potential donors and the presidential partner was compelled to attend. *"And then there's the University [Granny's] club. I am an Honorary President for the [Granny's] club. There's a local chapter and several across the state. Some of these clubs have been*

*around for years. For example, a regional group is celebrating their 80th anniversary. I receive invitations and I also receive newsletters each month that tell me of their monthly activities and I just put them on a calendar.”* [271-271] This particular presidential partner made it her goal to attend each alumni chapter across the nation at least once. Such positive comments and experiences influenced and continued to encourage the presidential partner to perform the university’s role expectations.

Faculty and staff were verbal in expressing their disapproval when the presidential partner was not present at events. For example, university personnel questioned one presidential partner who was employed full-time, when the presidential partner was not attending functions. *“There was one time when the Director of [Entertainment] would tell me about an event and when I responded that I was not going, she would respond, ‘You’re not coming? Why not?’”* [26]

The patriarchal structure of the university contributed significantly to influencing the presidential partner in conforming to the university’s traditional role expectations. This patriarchal structure was demonstrated in the behavior and actions of the Regents, administrators, students, faculty, staff, donors and alumni. This same patriarchal structure of the university also complemented the patriarchal structure in the community and together this relationship strongly influenced the presidential partner into performing the university’s traditional role expectations.

*The Community Culture.* The community played a major part in influencing the presidential partner to perform the traditional role expectations. The community included

such established organizational structures as charities, civic and service clubs, city and county government, churches, and private and public schools.

Traditionally the community and the university described the presidential partners as being the goodwill ambassadors and representatives of the university. According to the job description, *Presidential Partner/Associate of the President* (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n. d.), the role expectations clearly showed that presidential partners were expected to work with local organizations (See sections *Representing the University* and *Community Leadership*). These role expectations also assumed that the presidential partner and the community culture were similar in cultural values such as religious values and political thought.

The community organizations were aware of previous work by the university presidential partners and called upon the new presidential partner to perform as the previous partners such as host events; join their organizations; attend their meetings as the main speaker; emcee award and recognition dinners; attend numerous dedications, luncheons, and ceremonies; serve on task force committees; join their churches, and, a variety of other activities.

Community organizations also sought the presidential partner to serve on the board of directors because the university presidential partner heightened the organization's prestige, endorsement, and fundraising efforts. When appropriate, the presidential partner was direct with the community organizations about a potential conflict with the university's fundraising interests. One presidential partner told me that,

*“they had to make sure the organizations’ fundraising did not conflict with the university’s fundraising.”* [OC 236]

Presidential partners were advised by the Regents to interact with the community. Common responses from president partners were *“We wanted to get the local community on our campus and it was important we make a good impression”* [824] and *“We knew that attendance to college and community events were part of the expectations of me as the presidential partner.”* [225]

Therefore the presidential partner agreed to serve on various community committees and to host events at the presidential house. Hosting at the presidential house was an enormous task and an introduction to the future tasks associated with the university’s role expectations. *“There’s an event called the ‘Open House’ and it’s held during [Homecoming]. It is probably, for some, the only opportunity they will have to be able to see the President’s House. What surprises me was that guests would actually open the refrigerator, look in the oven, in the closet. It really surprises me that they do that.”* [291] (Four presidential partners experienced this type of activity multiple times a year.)

The existence of the university presidential house added innumerable role expectations on the presidential partner and additional staff were needed to coordinate the activities especially when there was a male presidential partner. One respondent reflected on their first presidency. *“I remember when we first arrived, I was asked to allow a local women’s group to have coffee here with a tour of the house. I was*

*surprised that they went everywhere including our bedroom and looked into the closets and cabinets.” [875]*

Another presidential partner was specific in her assigned task. *“One thing we have been working on is the town and gown relationship. We were told about the [Ivory Tower] referring to the historical relationship between this university and the community. We are conducting outreach to the community and bringing diverse individuals, organizations and cultures together. This is part of developing relationships by bringing the university to the community. We think we have made a difference with our outreach activities.” [353-354]*

If the community and university were receptive to dual career couples, male presidential partners, and/or any ethnic and cultural diversity demonstrated by the presidential partners, then the community and university population were receptive to non-traditional presidential partners. One university president made this comment, *“I made it very clear to my board and the community that my spouse had a career and that she should not have to compromise her career. It did not always make me popular with some people. There were a few people in the community who did not agree with me. At that university, all of my predecessors had had the traditional female presidential spouse. I was the first president that had a wife who had a career and was planning to keep it. The board thought it was wonderful that my wife had a career and they were supportive.” [1220-1222]*

In summary, the existences of a patriarchal culture at the university and in the community were the primary factors that influenced the presidential partners to perform the university's traditional role expectations.

*Research Question 3*

How does the university presidential partner perceive their ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation affecting the performance of their role expectations?

The research findings to this question were divided into three separate categories of ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. The three categories intersected with one another in various circumstances.

The numbers of ethnic minorities and GLBT university presidential partners in the country were fewer in comparison to their counterparts, White and/or heterosexual university presidential partners. Therefore the research findings were written to answer the research question and not to compromise the identity of the respondents.

*Influence of ethnicity.* The study included three African Americans, two Asian Americans, and four Latinas. Eight presidential partners worked full-time or part-time and one was retired. The one presidential partner who did not work outside the home was starting a business. The results from the study were presented according to the ethnic group, alphabetically.

*African American Presidential Partners.* The presidential partners in the study had advanced degrees and had professional careers. The respondents were from upper-middle class backgrounds and had attended prestigious universities. One presidential partner was retired, one worked full-time, and the other was unemployed. One

presidential partner's partner was the first African American president at the university. Two respondents were at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

One presidential partner who was employed on a full-time basis had no interest in performing any university work. As the presidential partner stated, *"I like to keep part of my life separate from the university... I do not have any projects for the university because it's not a priority."* [18, 24]

The retired presidential partner accompanied their partner to university events and saw their primary role as making family first and being supportive of their partner. *"I do what I do in support of the college and for my partner. It's not about me. And I don't mind it at all."* [539]

One African American presidential partner performed a strong and active university role because it was required. *"The system does have policies that clearly mention role expectations for the presidential partner such as assisting with entertaining, conducting community service, and making commitments. However the system does not compensate the partner for these performance expectations."* [1096]

The presidential partner was quite active in the community and involved in many predominantly White socially elite organizations and health related charities and organizations. The respondent shared a racially based experience that placed them in an uncomfortable position with White community members, *"I have also been asked multiple times for my opinion of issues because 'I represent the Black community.' I do not represent the Black community."* [1111] The African American respondent refused

to be placed in the role of representing the city's African American population, which would have perpetuated the stereotype that African Americans are a monolithic group.

One presidential partner felt that their ethnicity did affect their university work and in particular, their racial identity was called into question. The respondent was new to the community and after they became active, visible and successful in the community as the university's representatives, the respondent learned that other African Americans in the community were criticizing what they perceived as how the respondent had embraced their identity as an African American. *"I have received many negative comments from the African American community. I have heard that 'I'm too White.'"* [1110]

What was their reaction? *"I try not to let these negative comments bother me. I try to be true to myself. I know my identity."* [1112]

However the racial comments made by the African Americans in the community influenced the respondent to rejuvenate an affluent African American boys and girls club that was respected across the country. *"There is a non-profit ethnic minority family organization that had basically become defunct but I worked hard to bring it back. I'm proud to say that this organization is back up and contributing to the children in this community culturally and socially."* [1109]

In summary one African American presidential partner in this study reported that race had affected the performance of the university's role expectations by the presidential partner at a predominantly White university. In comparison, the other two presidential partners who were located at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

(HBCUs) reported that race was not a factor in affecting their decisions to perform the university's role expectations. Therefore, African American presidential partners experienced racism at a predominantly White university but not at Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs).

*Asian American Presidential Partners.* There were two immigrant Asians who participated in the study. Both presidential partners arrived in the United States as college students. Both presidential partners had advanced degrees and came from families who had advanced degrees as well. Both presidential partners were career professionals. The major difference between the two presidential partners' experiences was that one presidential partner was embraced by the community because of their ethnicity and the other presidential partner was not.

The first presidential partner I interviewed stated that they thought their ethnicity affected their role expectations in a positive manner. *"In fact, if anything, I think the community is intrigued and have been receptive and interested in our culture. If anything, our arrival has brought a different aspect to the university."* [340] This partner was successful in introducing diversity to the university and community. *"We recently held a four-day international film festival and it was very successful. The response was so positive, they want to make it an annual event."* [337]

The second Asian presidential partner's chilling words set the stage for their experiences. *"We were not anticipating the hate mail and death threats."* [446] The Asian presidential family endured years of hate mail and death threats and it continued during the time I conducted interviews for this study. The threats against the presidential

family were based on racial, cultural, and religious ignorance from the community and university faculty.

The Asian American presidential partner worked full-time at a neighboring city and was pursuing an advanced degree. The presidential partner stated that they had no interest in performing the university's traditional role expectations. However because of their experiences with racism and cultural ignorance, they were influenced to initiate outreach activities for the university and community.

The hate mail and death threats endured by the presidential family motivated the presidential partner to consider ways to educate the community on the value of diversity in ethnicity, culture, and religion, "*I thought it would help create greater community harmony and cultural and religious tolerance.*" [471]

The first initiative by the presidential partner was to write informative articles for the local paper. "*The purpose ...was to discuss my experiences, opinions, and provide information about our culture and customs as I found this region to be fairly ignorant. I thought this would be a good way to educate the community about the diversity we brought so that those who chose to can understand us better and not discriminate.*" [452]

The reception from the community and university was positive but the presidential family continued to receive anonymous threatening letters. The teachers and students at the school, because of cultural differences, harassed the presidential couple's children. At one point one of their children was held against their will by a high school

teacher for several hours until the child “*accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior.*” [OC 411]

I learned that the presidential partner had started sharing information with the community about a religious holiday tradition that coincided with other holidays in December. I read samples of the previous holiday letters and read the anonymous hate letters they had received. “*I send out 3,000 letters with small gifts associated with the holiday celebration. It’s my way of teaching cultural tolerance in the community. It has become quite a popular event in the community although I do get some negative feedback by way of anonymous hate mail and threats. Most of the time my actions are well received.*” [460-461] I learned that the presidential partner had paid for this project personally to avoid conflict of interest accusations.

In spite of the anonymous hate mail and death threats, the presidential partner continued to develop and personally fund projects advocating tolerance and knowledge about diversity. The presidential partner created and personally funded a leadership program for high school females. The racially and culturally diverse young women gathered from across the United States and learned about leadership, worked on their communication skills, and explored issues of diversity. The presidential partner explained her commitment to this project. “*I look at it as an investment for my own mental well-being, while preparing our young for the diverse world in which they will have to live and lead!*” [467]

In summary, both of the Asian American presidential partners experienced drastically different responses from the university and community based on their

ethnicity and culture. For the Asian American presidential partner who was embraced by the community, it affected their performance of the university's role expectations. For the second Asian American presidential partner, the racism and cultural ignorance of the community affected their rejection of the presidential partner. In turn, such negative actions by the community influenced the presidential partner to refuse to conduct any university work on campus and in the community.

The second Asian presidential partner did not consider her activities in educating the community about their ethnicity and culture as university work. It was unknown whether the community agreed with the presidential partner's assessment, if the community identified the presidential partner's endeavors as part of the university's outreach program, or both.

*Latina Presidential Partners.* The Latina presidential partners had full-time professional careers and family responsibilities, which included college age children, grandchildren, extended family members, and/or elderly parents and in-laws. All four presidential partners did perform the university's primary role expectations of entertaining and hosting events, assisting with fundraising, and accompanying the president to numerous college-related events.

One presidential partner observed that the university and community were empathetic if there were conflicts with family and attending events, "*People were very supportive if I couldn't make events because of the children. In this community, they are very family oriented so there wasn't pressure for me to be at all events.*" [575]

All four Latina presidential partners admitted they had a challenge when asked to serve on committees or worked on projects. For example, their full-time employment, family responsibilities, and performing the primary role expectations such as entertaining, hosting, fundraising, and attending college events kept them exhausted.

One presidential partner sent me a sample of her week's activities and there was not a single free night except for three hours on a Sunday evening, "*Time management is a challenge. Juggling the multiple commitments that appear on the calendar.... Weekends are busier than weeknights especially for entertaining and events. Just this Saturday we have two events to attend.*" [605-607]

In this study, did the Latina presidential partners think racism had influenced their university work? All of the Latina presidential partners responded initially that racism was not a factor and they saw themselves as a role model. "*I wish to serve as a role model for others.*" [243] However as the interviews progressed there were times when it became clear to the respondents that their ethnicity had been an issue. For example, there were two respondents who shared their experiences that intersected with issues of racism, positionality, social status, and being incongruent with the community culture.

In summary, the Latina presidential partners in this study stated that racism did not influence their university work. Instead what influenced their university work was maintaining a dual career, issues with social class, and conflicts with positionality. The influential factors of social class and positionality were discussed in *Chapter IV*

*Research Questions 2 and 3*, respectively, and dual careers discussed in *Chapter IV Additional Research Findings*.

*Influence of Gender.*

*Female Presidential Partners.* There were 18 female presidential partners in the study. The female presidential partners had the burden of explaining why they were unable to perform the traditional role expectations. The presidential partners who chose not to conform to the university's role expectations learned that they were expected to accompany the president to college events, host and entertaining college guests, assist their partners with fundraising, and substitute for the President when appropriate.

For an extensive discussion on the university's patriarchal culture and gender bias role expectations for the female presidential partners, refer to *Chapter II Literature Review* and *Chapter IV, Research Question 1*.

*Male Presidential Partners.* There were six male presidential partners in the study. As the researcher I tried not to have the previous female respondent's comments affect my objectivity when I met with the male presidential partners. I had heard from the female respondents about male presidential partners. "*He doesn't have to do a thing as the presidential partner.*" [143] I learned that statement was not true.

The male presidential partners were empathetic in that they had no intention of conducting any of the traditional role expectations normally associated with the female presidential partner. One male presidential partner acknowledged the double standard in the role expectations. "*I realize that other female presidential partners are expected to*

*do a lot of entertaining and I have thought that I should do more but I just do not have the inclination nor the time.” [993]*

The Regents, however, did expect the male presidential partners to accompany the President to college-related events such as ceremonies, athletic events, concerts, receptions, and plays. The other expectations for the male presidential partners were to assist their partner in hosting and entertaining university guests, faculty, staff, and students; assist the president in fundraising; and, substitute for the president when appropriate.

These expectations from the university patriarchal culture were not based on the traditional role expectations for presidential partners, but rather from the patriarchal expectations that a married president should exemplify a stable marriage. As a consequence, the Regents encouraged the male presidential partner to accompany the president to various college-related functions and especially for the university’s fundraising efforts.

The male presidential partners shared their initial experiences with the Regents. *“During the interviewing process, I did meet with the Board of Trustees. I knew I was being checked out. Perhaps it was about being presentable. ‘He’s not a criminal’. (Laughs) They thought, ‘Good family, he’s a nice guy, and supports his wife.’” [515]*

The second male presidential partner’s experience. *“We were scrutinized very carefully. Evidently there had been a scandal (with the previous president involving an affair resulting in a messy divorce). They wanted to know more about the stability of our marriage more than anything.” [983]*

Another example from a male presidential partner. *“My first experience was when we immediately had to ...be introduced to the faculty, students, and the community. They insisted I go with her. We boarded a private jet ...When we arrived, the room was packed...I later learned that the reason I had to be there was so the community wanted to know who was the spouse of the new president.”* [408]

In another example, the Regents knew that the presidential couple was going to maintain a commuter marriage because they had dual careers. However, shortly after the partner became president, the presidential couple received a different message. *“...the Chancellor and his partner did speak with us over dinner about their grave concerns of how I would be able to entertain since I would be commuting. I think it was their way of telling us that they thought I should be there with my wife.”* [380]

The male presidential partners learned that their partner, the president, was pressured by the university and the community to have their partners present for college and community activities. *“They would ask her ‘where is he?’ ‘Where’s her husband?’”* [374]

The expectation existed that the male presidential partners, regardless of sexual orientation, were expected to attend university functions. The openly gay presidential partner stated, *“When I have attended these events the Regents has always been happy to see me attend. They make me feel welcomed.”* [915]

The university patriarchal culture was evident when the male presidential partner learned that they were expected to entertain and host events, attend college events, woo potential donors, and substitute for the president when appropriate.

However, the Regents assured the male presidential partners that they were not expected to make the arrangements for entertaining, serve on committees, and maintain the presidential house or other traditional role expectations normally handled by the female presidential partner. Such assurances from the universities confirmed the continued existence of a double standard of role expectations between female and male presidential partners. Therefore, the patriarchal structure in universities existed at the governing and executive level of the university and throughout the university.

Event planners, university departments and other campus personnel were assigned responsibility for the traditional duties previously associated with the female presidential partner. One male presidential partner commented. *“My wife’s university has a development office and they take care of all the details. They make sure I have a nametag to wear. They tell me about the type of dress expected and provide me with the VIP list so I have an idea of who will be in attendance so I can be prepared for conversation. The list also tells me whether they are donors and their level of giving.”*  
[395]

The previous example supported Goffman’s (1966) discussion of preparing for a performance, the scripts being prepared and the stage being arranged and set. In this example, the setting was the presidential house and the fundraising event. The props were the nametags, the list of VIPs with their importance and financial generosity, and the respondent wearing the appropriate attire. The presidential partner played the performance. The list of donors was his script for the evening.

I learned during my interviews that although the male presidential partners stated that they were not performing any of the university's traditional role expectations, in fact they were. Because the presidential partners were married to the president, the Regents, campus community and local community expected the male presidential partners to accompany their partners to college-related events.

All six male presidential partners stated that they accompanied their partners to parties, college celebrations, conferences, dinners, fundraisers, donor's homes and a variety of other events. The male presidential partners also played host with their partner in their home and on campus. Three of the male presidential partners mentioned having so many events to attend that they eventually had to buy their tuxedo and one even had five tuxedos because they had so many events to attend.

The presidential partners made the following comments as they described their ways of supporting their partner. They were unaware that their actions were part of the university's traditional role expectations.

*"I help her with fundraising activities and entertaining here and off campus."*  
[47]

*"How I help my wife is many times she will be double-booked for events and I will attend for her when she cannot make it."* [53]

*"I have had to give speeches at times and at other times I just mingle and 'work the crowd.'" [54]*

*"There were so many tux parties that I had to attend that I eventually had to buy a tuxedo."* [409]

*“In my current role as the presidential partner, my role is helping with fundraising.... My role now is to help the donors feel comfortable on campus and at events. It is mostly social interaction.”* [1214-1215]

Two male presidential partners were involved in community charitable activities in addition to the usual entertaining and hosting, helping with fundraising, and attending college events with the president. The two presidential partners had initially undertaken short-term projects involving fundraising for the university and local charities. One respondent was involved in an outreach project on behalf of the university at the time of the study.

One of the two presidential partners had positive experiences in their university work. The respondent was retired, had an outgoing personality, and enjoyed his role and his title. *“The First Gentleman. I have lots of fun with it. Even my auto license plate states: 1st Gent. Some even have had fun with the title and called me “First Stud.”* [986]

There was one presidential partner who wanted to be supportive and acknowledged that he was not comfortable being in such a public role. *“I must admit that the greatest challenges I face are being social. I am an introvert. I have been told that I appear cerebral, reserved, shy, and aloof. Perhaps that is true and may explain why it’s hard to put me out there. They expect me to be sociable, gregarious, articulate, and a good conversationalist. I feel that I have to constantly perform a role that isn’t me. It’s very painful.”* [921-922] In this example the role conflict experienced by the presidential partner was attributed to role malintegration where the presidential partner’s personality did not fit the role expectation.

In summary, the influence of gender on the university role expectations was significant. The experiences shared by the male presidential partners were very gendered. The male presidential partners expressed their empathy of the double standard of role expectations that their counterparts experienced but were also adamant that they would not conduct any of the traditional role expectations. The university supported the patriarchal double standard by providing additional personnel for handling the preparations for college related entertaining, maintaining the presidential house, and housekeepers for cooking, cleaning, and household maintenance when there were male presidential partners. In other words, the female presidential partners were not treated equally by the university based on their gender confirming the continued existence of a patriarchal institution.

In addition, the male presidential partners unknowingly conformed to the university's primary role expectations of accompanying the president to college events, hosting and entertaining, substituting for the president, and assisting with fundraising because it demonstrated their support for their partner and demonstrated a stable and committed partnership.

*Influence of Sexual Orientation.* Sexual orientation as one of the factors influencing the university's role expectations was included in the study. However, the information on the specific names of GLBT presidential partners was not available outside the AASCU office. According to Fain (2007b) there were eleven GLBT presidential partners who voluntarily contacted him. One openly gay presidential partner agreed to be interviewed for the study and although the respondent pool was not large

enough to provide for a comparison, his experience as a presidential partner was significant.

The gay presidential partner expressed surprise when his partner became a university president. *“I never thought I would become a presidential partner. I also never thought that my partner would be able to break the glass ceiling against gays. I thought academia was far too conservative.”* [895-896]

The respondent initially learned that he did not have any role expectations as the presidential partner. *“It wasn’t until after my partner had been notified that he was their final choice did my role expectations arise. The Regents told my partner that they did not have any expectations of me as the presidential partner.”* [901-902]

As with the other male presidential partners, the respondent stated that he did not have to handle the planning responsibilities for entertaining. *“When my partner does entertain, he will either hold it off campus or on-campus. His staff takes care of all the details like invitations, RSVPs, decorating, catering, clean up, etc. I do not have to deal with that.”* [914].

However, the presidential partner eventually learned that he was expected to attend some of the university events and was welcomed by the Regents. *“When I have attended these events the Regents have always been happy to see me attend. They make me feel welcomed.”* [915]

The respondent stated that his partner would ask him to attend university-related functions with him. At first he was able to attend various university events with his partner but after he began working full-time, he had less time. *“When I was able to show*

*up at college related activities with my partner, you could tell he was happy that I could be there. He has told me before. 'I want you to be here with me.' I understand what he means...that it can be lonely for him."* [911-912]

In summary, the openly gay presidential partner conformed to the university's primary role expectations because he wanted to be supportive of his partner and as a consequence, demonstrated the university's patriarchal structure of a stable and committed partnership.

Figure 7 illustrates the primary role expectations from the female and male presidential partners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

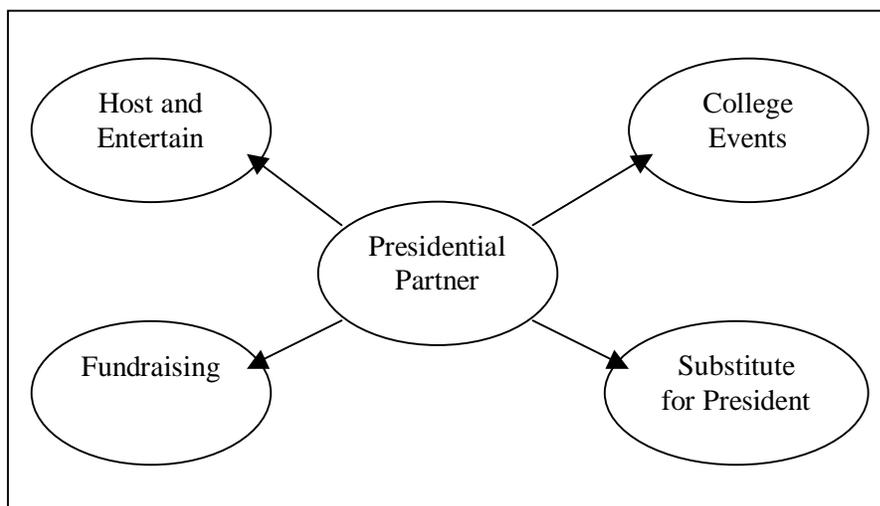


FIG. 7. Four Primary Role Expectations. Both female and male presidential partners are expected to perform these four primary traditional role expectations.

*Research Question 4*

How does the university presidential partner perceive social class affecting their role expectations?

The research question was intended to explore whether the university work conducted by the presidential partner was affected as a result of a perceived difference in social class status between the presidential partner and the university's donors and community's social elite. It was evident during the interview that several presidential partners had never been asked about social class differences. However for a few presidential partners it appeared from their body language (nodding heads, chuckles, shrugging shoulders) that there was a sense of relief that someone had asked.

The results showed that a majority of the presidential partners had not perceived any social class stereotyping as typically associated with their role as presidential partner. One response was, *"I have never experienced any arrogance or behavior from them that gave me an impression that I was not of their class status."* [355]

Other presidential partners clarified the type of social class people they met, *"It's different. It's not about money. It's not about their or my class status. These multimillionaires are people who are committed to education. They want to make a difference. They want to support the university, the student, and research. In fact, they are in awe of what the university has to offer and what it has produced in the quality of graduates and research. So it's not a class-status thing."* [1186-1187]

One presidential partner thought her upbringing and college experiences had prepared her mingling with the socially elite, *"How I was prepared for this role was my*

*previous role as a sorority president. There are a lot of similarities from that role to what I have to do here. I do a lot of hosting, entertaining ...mingling with people...so many similarities. When I was much younger, I had a family member that would take out her best china and silver and she would show me how to serve. I had a lot of fun with her learning how to be a lady (smiling).” [1144-1145]*

However there were three experiences with issues of social class that affected the presidential partner’s university work. A White, Latina and an African American presidential partner provided examples of their experiences with the socially elite.

The first example was prefaced by a White presidential partner’s descriptions of the socially elite groups they had encountered. The presidential partner categorized the social elites into two levels. *“On class consciousness, there are the haves and the have-nots.... In the category of the haves there are about 3 levels. The categories are the haves, the “wannabes”, and the middle-income. The haves are the ones that were born into money and have always had it. Sometimes you can tell if they are the haves but not always. The wannabes are the ones that have new money, want to be one of the haves but do not have what it takes to be in that top category. The haves and other influential people determine ‘What it takes.’ The middle-income are people who are down to earth people, made their money with or without a formal education, and are supportive of their community.... It’s interesting to walk in the high-income circle (the multimillionaires). We are expected to participate and to give in that circle but for the most part I have nothing in common with the haves. Many are much older women. (Pauses) In this community, the haves clearly are the ones that like to give. The haves*

*however, given the culture of the area, have deep rooted prejudices. There are some millionaires who will give money for scholarships as long as it does not go to ethnic minority students or international programs. [732-737]*

The presidential partner's last comments added an unexpected insight into the power and privilege of the socially elite. Nevertheless, the presidential partner's information on the socially elite provided some background on an actual conflict they were experiencing. Additionally, the presidential partner had not decided which service club to join, the social elites or the middle class. The decision, the presidential partner thought, centered on whether the club was for personal enjoyment or for university work. The conflict arose when the opinions of the presidential couple differed.

I observed the following example after a day of shadowing the presidential partner. The president had returned home after a long day at the office. *"The respondent and husband discussed the importance of joining the 'right' clubs (she cannot join both). Although she enjoys one particular women's group because they share interests, the other group is older, wealthier, and pillars of the community. The husband states that she needs to join the elitist group regardless of her feelings about the other group. The president states that although she doesn't get paid as the presidential partner, she does 'work' and part of her work is to be a member of the elitist group because that group is beneficial for the university's fundraising."* [OC 223-225] This example demonstrated that the president expected the presidential partner to conform to the university's patriarchal role expectations and align with the socially elite because it benefited the president and the university. The conversation demonstrated the influence of the

patriarchal structure of the university, its disregard for the presidential partner's personal wishes, and its attempt to control the behavior and actions of the female presidential partner.

The next example illustrated an experience that occurred with a Latina presidential partner that affected their perception of the community's social elite class. *"The 'elite' in this particular community were very clannish. They have been the elite for many generations and have quite a social standing in this town. They are wealthy and powerful. Perhaps they were not aware of our own family history and that may be the reason we were not invited into their circles. I really do not know. Both our paternal and maternal families, who are in national and state social history, were quite impressive and distinguished ...so I don't know why we were not included... (Pause). In fact, we were told that if we had been White, then perhaps we would have been invited to join them."* [1081-1083] These experiences, which took place years ago, not only affected the presidential partner's university work but also continued to haunt her.

The final example demonstrated an experience between the African American presidential partner and a socially elite White female and yet it did not deter the African American presidential partner from continuing with her university and community work. *"There are many assumptions by the Whites in this community that because I am African American that I do not know how the wealthy behave or dress. They think I do not have a clue. They cannot conceive that perhaps I may already come from an upper-middle income family as well as my husband. For example: There is this one White woman. I know she has good intentions. She tries to tell me how to dress, the proper etiquette in*

*gift giving for certain social events, how to select jewelry, and other things. She is constantly reminding me of what I should do and how to act. Of course, less than 20 years ago, this woman had a humble existence and to this day still doesn't practice what she preaches. But she thinks she can remind me how to dress and how I should behave (Head downward, shaking side to side, smiling)."* [1115]

In summary, the university presidential partners were cognizant of the social elites in the community and the importance to associate with them as part of their role expectations of fundraising for the university. All of the presidential partners knew they were equals with the socially elite; however, two ethnic minority presidential partners experienced discrimination from the socially elite because they (the respondents) were perceived by the socially elite as not being the social elite's equals.

#### *Research Question 5*

How does positionality relate to the university presidential partner's role expectations?

*(Laughing) Many times I am invited to a lunch and I have learned that the purpose of the lunch is to help with fundraising or to become a board member.* [832]

The quote above illustrated how the presidential partner initially began to realize their positionality as the presidential partner. Positionality or the link associated with the university president had an effect on the respondent's university work. The research findings demonstrated that there were advantages and disadvantages to the presidential partner's positionality.

This study found that seven female and four male presidential partners limited their support to hosting, entertaining, and fundraising at their partner's university. These 11 presidential partners did have opinions about their positionality as the presidential partner. However, I decided that the response to the research question would reflect the opinions of the remaining 13 presidential partners who were performing a significant amount of activities beyond hosting, entertaining, and fundraising at their partner's university.

There were 13 presidential partners who agreed that their positionality impacted their university and community work. The presidential partners knew positionality would aid them in accomplishing their university work. However, when the male respondents had a negative experience because of their positionality, they quit their university work or if female, made adjustments and adapted. Table 8 was designed to show the advantages and disadvantages of positionality for the university presidential partner.

*Positionality as an Advantage.* Many presidential partners did not realize initially how the positionality of being the partner of the university president could benefit the university and their university work. One presidential partner stated, “*I use to be offended at first but now I realize that the position (presidential partner), not me personally, is held in high regard and therefore it's a complement to the university. I now realize that having my name on a board lends credibility to the project. (Pausing and reflecting) I do not know how many doors would have been open without being a presidential partner.*” [832-835]

Another presidential partner made the following observation. *“There is an advantage of being the presidential spouse. It gets you in the door with people who have influence and can use it.”* [208]

In the two examples, the advantage of positionality brought credibility to the project, prestige to the charity, and an opportunity to access key people.

<b>TABLE 8</b>	
<b>Advantages and Disadvantages of Positionality for the University Presidential Partner</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brings attention and prestige to projects and organization</li> <li>2. University staff available to assist</li> <li>3. Projects accomplished sooner</li> <li>4. Access to key figures</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loss of employment</li> <li>2. Requests for favors</li> <li>3. People try to use you to bypass protocol</li> <li>4. Punitive actions from employer</li> <li>5. Cannot express honest opinions</li> <li>6. Comments misinterpreted as the President’s opinions</li> </ol>

Once the presidential partners understood the advantages of being associated with the university and the president, they decided to use it for their university work. *“My status as presidential partner does help a lot. At first I did not realize how much*

*your actions and comments are tied to your husband, the president.... This is ideal because I can focus on what I think is important and make better utilization of my energy, skills, and time for the betterment of the university and especially the students.”*  
[707, 713]

Presidential partners recognized that projects that had been postponed or lacked leadership could be reinvigorated. *“My status as a presidential partner helps a lot. Because of my husband’s position, people seem to be more responsive to helping me accomplish various projects.”* [335]

Others saw the efficiency of positionality. *“My status as a presidential partner helps. I’m not sure if you could accomplish this much in such a short amount of time.”*  
[647]

*Positionality as a Disadvantage.* Positionality to the president did create conflict with one presidential partner’s university work. In the next example, the committee misinterpreted the comments voiced by the presidential partner and assumed the comments represented the President’s opinions. As a consequence, the respondent decided to terminate any further university and community work. *“I used to serve on committees like the celebrity tournaments but I decided to get off those committees. I realized that when you sit on these committees, the others think you’re the President when you give suggestions or make comments when in reality I’m not. My comments and suggestions are my original thoughts and opinions.”* [51]

The following experience created financial insecurity for one presidential partner and the respondent decided to terminate their work for the university. *“In some*

*communities my profession can be perceived as being politically charged because of the population served and the way it is funded (minorities and low income). Unfortunately, a powerful regent demanded I be removed from the campus facility (wife's university) or my wife would be fired. So I was forced to move my office that was paid for by a different institution, from the campus."* [390] This experience and other similar experiences resulted not from their university work but because of their positionality to the partner, the university president. Positionality, in this example, caused the loss of employment. The presidential partner decided not to continue any further university and community work that would be misinterpreted as being linked to his wife or her university thereby reducing or eliminating any potential conflict.

Examples of the disadvantages of positionality were requests for special favors from the university by local organizations, "*...they are always asking me if they can get free printing for special events. Or they may approach me to ask if I can make arrangements for them to use a specific building or area for an event or even if the university can make a financial contribution to their fund-raiser."* [1120-1121] In this example, the presidential partner was diplomatic in saying "no" and referring the people to the appropriate university personnel. Obviously the presidential partner knew to be careful in their refusal to serve as an intermediary because community people with such requests were supportive in other university activities.

In the following example, the presidential partner's understanding of the negative aspects of positionality did not deter her goal in accomplishing her community work. "*I am unable to request grant funding for [my project] because associations I would*

*approach might think I was doing the project as part of my husband's university. Therefore I underwrite the entire [project] out of my personal funds because I didn't want to create a conflict of interest for my husband and the university.” [467]*

In summary, positionality did affect the presidential partner's university work because it provided attention and emphasis to specific projects, provided additional resources to the project, and ensured the completion of the project. Although positionality did expose the presidential partners to various conflicts as demonstrated in the examples, the majority of presidential partners were not deterred from their university work and remained focused in completing projects that benefited the students, their partner, and the university.

#### *Research Question 6*

How have universities changed their support for the presidential partners?

The study allowed an opportunity to determine if university support had changed for the presidential partner since the last survey conducted 23 years ago (Clodius & Magrath, 1984). Before I present the research findings it was necessary to put into context the major changes that universities and presidents had experienced during that time. These changes were (a) an increase in male presidential partners, (b) an increase in ethnic minority presidential partners, (c) an increase in dual career presidential partner couples, (d) fewer presidential partners involved in the presidential selection interviewing process, and (e) an increase in privately owned presidential homes. These changes affected how universities changed their support for university presidential

partners and were described in greater detail before responding to the fifth research question.

*Increase in Male Presidential Partners.* In a comparison of the *AASCU Partner Directory 2005* to the *AASCU Partner Directory 2006* there was a 20 % increase in male presidential partners, specifically from 50 to 60 male partners.

In the study conducted by Smith (2001) the only role expectations of the community college male presidential partners were to accompany the president to college events and maintain a supportive role. From the comments made by the respondents in this study, the university's patriarchal culture had four role expectations of the male presidential partner. This assessment was demonstrated by the university requiring the presidential partner to accompany the president to college related activities, host and entertain university guests, assist with fundraising, and substitute for the president when needed.

In this study, the universities demonstrated a change in role expectations of the female presidential partner as the number of dual career presidential partnerships increased. Upon negotiation with the presidential couple, the university provided personnel to coordinate the details in maintaining the presidential house, planning for functions on campus and at the presidential residence, as well as other duties.

*Ethnic Minority Presidential Partners.* In previous research studies no ethnic minority university presidential partners were ever queried about their experiences. A significant change since the last university presidential partner study (Clodius & Magrath, 1984) was the inclusion of ethnic minority presidential partners. Since I did not

have access to archival membership records of any of the national president's associations it was hard to assess the historical growth of ethnic minority presidential partnerships.

In a comparison of the *AASCU Partner Directory 2005* to the *AASCU Partner Directory 2006* there were no increases in the number of ethnic minority female presidential partners. However, there was one new African American male presidential partner in 2006.

In the *AASCU Partner Directory 2005* there were 287 presidential partners listed. There were eighteen African American females, three African American males, three Asian females, four Latinas, and one Latino listed. In the *AASCU Partner Directory 2006* there was an increase from three to four African American male presidential partners.

In this survey, 12 presidential partners worked full-time, four worked part-time and two were retired. There were three presidential partners who did not work outside the home who were active in university work. The university patriarchal culture expected all of the ethnic minority female presidential partners to perform university work regardless of their employment status. Of the nine ethnic minority presidential partners, one partner who was employed full-time resisted efforts by the university to take an active role in performing university work.

However, the respondent's comments showed that they had agreed to accompany the president to college events and assist with fundraising sparingly. The conformity to role taking was evident among all of the ethnic minority presidential partners.

*Increase in Dual Career Presidential Partners.* The study showed an increase of females trying to maintain their professional career and as a result, conducting less university work. These female presidential partners held positions as university faculty, researchers for private industry, university administrators, and public school teachers and administrators. Two women owned their own businesses. In addition, two female partners were working on their doctoral degrees.

The male university presidential partner perspective had not been studied previously. In this study, the male presidential partners had careers primarily as university faculty. The study findings revealed that the majority of men, regardless of employment status, refused to perform any of the university's role expectations. As one presidential partner stated, "*There should not be those expectations that women or men partners should have to give up their own career if they want to continue with that career.*" [1228]

Later I would learn that some of the male presidential partners were unsure of what were their role expectations. "*It was not clear to me what was the presidential spouse's role and its part in the institutional culture.*" [514] The study showed that the conformity to the university's role expectations was influenced through the comments from their partners and the Regents.

*Fewer Presidential Partners Involved in the Interviewing Process.* Another difference on how university support had changed was the ambiguous communication, lack of clarifying role expectations and negotiating an employment position for the

presidential partner with the presidential search committee during the interviewing process.

In previous years, during the interviewing process, the presidential partners met with members of the selection committee and/or Regents. The interview provided an opportunity for the Regents to meet the couple and determine whether the presidential partner would fit in with the campus culture. These interviews provided the presidential couple an opportunity to gather information about the university's role expectations for the presidential partner.

As time progressed, universities across the nation became aware that to interview the presidential partner was misconstrued as discriminatory against single presidential candidates, therefore the interview with the presidential partner was eliminated from the interviewing process. As one presidential partner observed, "*I think the Regents had been advised by legal counsel they shouldn't interview the partner.*" [1027]

Therefore, the responsibility fell on the presidential candidate to bring up the partner's role expectations during the presidential search interviewing process. A long-term presidential partner observed, "*My opinion is that there needs to be a conversation with the Board about expectations and for the discussion to be explicit in details during the interviewing process. The Board may say there are no expectations but there needs to be a discussion of specifics. Does the Board expect the partner to help with fundraising, attendance at athletic events, commencements, and so on? Get the details.*" [1236-1237]

The other conversation between the presidential candidate and the presidential search interviewing committee and Regents was the presidential partner's employment requirements. Previous studies showed that some presidential partners kept their faculty positions when their partners were promoted to the presidency (Clodius & McGrath, 1984). However, retention of faculty positions occurred if the partner had been selected as president from the university ranks.

In this study, 23 of the 24 presidents were hired from another university. The one president had been selected from among the faculty ranks and that presidential partner was not employed at the university.

The research findings provided two variants on the university hiring the presidential partner. Five of the twenty-four universities hired the presidential partner with tenured rank and four universities cited conflict of interest or nepotism. In the study there were four presidential candidates who were prepared to discuss and negotiate employment for the presidential partner. One presidential partner provided this insight, *“What is important to understand is that a person does not apply unless they want that president's position. They have the drive and ambition to be president and they need to talk with their partner and decide as a family whether they want to maintain both careers and how they will do it... They need to have those conversations as a couple before it gets to the critical stage. That critical stage in a president's job interview is when the Board is at the hiring stage and that stage goes by very quickly.”* [1244, 1246]

Another presidential partner provided their negotiation strategy, *“when my husband was approached for this position, he made it clear that this was a partnership*

*marriage. It was a condition of his being hired that I would be given a tenured full-time position because that was what I would be giving up at our previous university if we came. If they could not do that, then we could not consider accepting the presidency.”* [1042]

There were six presidential partners who moved to the new community without employment. Two presidential partners, who owned a business, moved their business with them. One alternative for the other dual career presidential partnership, who were unable to negotiate employment for the presidential partner, was for the presidential partner to remain behind, take care of the children and home and commute to their partner’s university whenever possible. One presidential partner reflected on their decision. “...*I had been working, taking care of our son, living apart from my wife, teaching a full load every semester, responsible for our home so I had a lot of stress...*” [520]

Another male presidential partner expressed his frustration, “*I loved the work I was doing when my wife first became a president. I was reluctant about giving up my job but I did so I could be with her. I hated commuting and I missed her.*” [387] That particular presidential partner had been assured that the university would help secure employment for him but it did not happen. “*They spoke of trying to help me find something (employment) but they did not come through.*” [392]

One presidential partner was able to find employment but it was in another community and had a long weekly commute. “*I taught at another campus because of nepotism laws I could not teach at my husband’s university. So I commuted daily for ...*

*years and became quite exhausted of driving 600 miles weekly. Eventually I was able to secure a position locally that keeps me quite busy but at least I do not have the driving with which to deal.” [456]*

One male presidential partner had a difficult time adjusting to his loss of a tenured position and having to start all over again in a new urban community with no social network. *“Suddenly, I’m nobody. I would sit in faculty meeting and my comments were ignored. Before I had been a tenured professor and people respected my opinions. But now, nothing. I had been uprooted from an academic community I enjoyed as well as from family and friends. It became so difficult that I became depressed.” [908]*

In summary, unless the presidential partner’s employment or the loss of their employment due to the university’s nepotism policy is negotiated during the presidential search process, the alternatives of forcing the presidential partner into commuting, or remaining unemployed created great levels of anxiety, frustration and in role overload for the presidential partner. As one presidential partner asked during the interview, *“I wonder if other presidential partners have had the same problems with adjusting. I’m wondering if there are others dealing with these issues of career and maintaining a relationship.” [909]*

*Increase in privately owned presidential homes.* One change in current institutional support for university work by the presidential partner was the university owned presidential house. A previous study showed that 72% of the presidential families lived in the university’s president’s house (Ostar, 1984, p. 103). In this study 14 of the 24 university presidential families lived off campus in their privately owned home.

However, the Regents expected the female presidential partner to entertain and the privately owned home was selected based on that expectation. Therefore, if the university expected the privately owned home to be used for entertaining, the university provided a housing allowance and staff to help with catering and house maintenance. All of these issues such as housing allowance, maintenance, and role expectations were negotiated during the hiring process.

Previously the university-owned presidential house was available for various groups and associations to use. The presidential house was available for college-sponsored events such as the annual Open House, homecoming receptions, tours of the house, dinners, meetings, holiday celebrations, hosting official guests, and other activities. The existence of the presidential house added innumerable role expectations for the female presidential partner and additional staff to coordinate the activities when there was a male presidential partner.

As one male presidential partner observed there was an advantage of not living in a university-owned presidential house. *“We do not have a presidential house so I do not have to do tours (Laughing).”* [1211]

*Summary of Research Findings on How the Universities have Changed Their Support for the Presidential Partner.* As a consequence of these changes that occurred in universities and the presidential partnerships in this study, the response to the fifth research question was that patriarchal universities expected the female and male presidential partner to perform select role expectations, i.e. accompanying the president to college events, hosting and entertaining university guests, assisting with fundraising,

and substituting for the president when appropriate. Universities, however, now started to provide personnel to assist and coordinate the details associated with fundraising, entertaining, and hosting university functions when there was a dual career couple or a male presidential partner. As one presidential partner observed, *“Across the country there are now a fair number of female university presidents, and society is adjusting to the dual career family.”* [1224]

In this study, the findings show that personal assistants were provided to help with invitations, schedule meetings and other engagements; coordinate meetings and a variety of other needed services for the female presidential partner who had a full-time professional career. *“The university does provide a housekeeper and a courier who can run errands and be the chauffeur, which is quite helpful ...There is an assistant in the development office who takes care of menus, caterers, invitations, preparing the house, and all those other details that I could not do because of my daytime work.”* [115-116]

However, university support for the presidential partner was not uniform across the universities. Such support was requested by the president during the presidential search interviewing sessions or after the president was hired.

The findings in this study showed that Regents were receptive in providing clarification of expected university work, providing employment opportunities for the presidential partner, and providing support personnel to assist the presidential partner with university related work when negotiated during the interviewing stages of the presidential search. The Regents were receptive to providing such support, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

### *Theoretical Framework*

Role theory was the theoretical framework that guided the research (Biddle & Thomas, 1966; Biddle, 1986). Throughout the research study there were findings associated with various roles of the presidential partner, the social and political position of the presidential partner and the university's role expectations.

In the examples that follow, I explained the findings from the study to the various role concepts (consensus, conformity, conflict, ambiguity, malintegration, discontinuity, overload, and role taking) and how these concepts intersected with the presidential partner's ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. The figure on page 174 illustrates the research findings pertaining to the role theory framework and the resulting multiple role conflicts.

#### *Consensus*

In the previous research surveys it was reported there was a consensus about the university's patriarchal traditional role expectations and specifically how that had been created and maintained by educated, upper-class White women (Corbally, 1977; Ostar, 1983; Chance-Reay, 1999). This study demonstrated that as a consequence of the increase in the number of male presidential partners and the increase in dual career couples there were no longer a consensus about university role expectations being performed by university presidential partners.

The findings from this study demonstrated a consensus among the respondents that the university's patriarchal structure continues to exist. One full-time career

professional presidential partner who was expected to perform some of the traditional role expectations commented that they thought the university culture would be slow to change its expectation of female presidential partners. “*No. I don’t think the institution will ever change because it’s ingrained on tradition.*” [144]

The consensus that resulted from this study was that all presidential partners regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation were expected to perform four primary roles; to attend college activities with their partner, host and entertain with their partner, to assist their partner with fundraising activities, and substitute for the president when appropriate.

#### *Conformity*

The pressure to conform to specific roles was demonstrated in this study with the discovery of training manuals produced by two national president’s association presidential partner support groups. These manuals affirmed the university’s traditional role expectations and provided little acknowledgement of the female career professional and male presidential partner. However, the extent of the manual’s dissemination among the association members was unclear.

For example, in the last two months one of the guides, CIC’s *Presidential Spouse 101: My spouse is a college president--now what do I do?* was no longer available on the association’s website.

Regardless of the availability of the training manual on the CIC website, perusing the website showed that the presidential partner support groups continued to emphasize

the traditional role expectations at their annual conferences sessions. This clearly demonstrated an expectation for conformity.

The presidential partners who chose to perform the university's role expectations requested training or guidance manuals to learn how to conform to the role expectations and to perform it well and make their efforts in representing the university successful. *"It would be great if there were a set of guidelines, role expectations, and reality checks of what you should do and not do. That would make life easier."* [750]

### *Role Conflict*

Role conflict was evident throughout the research findings with the university's patriarchal role expectations intersecting with family responsibilities, dual career presidential families, and presidential partners who were not employed and wanted to work but could not because of conflict of interest, positionality, or lack of employment opportunities. Figure 8 illustrates the continued experiences of conflict within these intersecting factors and the university's patriarchal expectations.

The university's role expectations created role conflicts for the presidential partners in multiple contexts. One respondent shared their experience. *"Actually, my status as the presidential spouse has made it harder to accomplish my career related projects. There is so much entertaining and hosting required of me as the presidential spouse, that I have had to find employment that provides me with a standard 8-5 job rather than a higher executive job that would require some evening and weekend work."* [121-122]

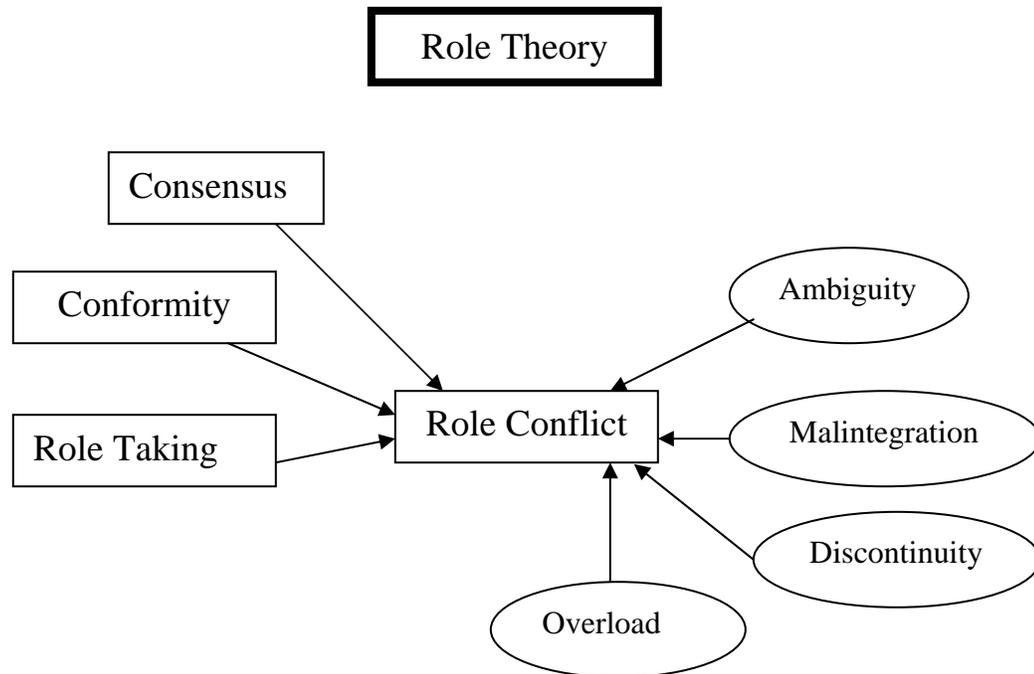


FIG. 8. The Impact of Traditional Role Expectations on the Presidential Partner. The role expectations created role conflict within all conceptual roles when the university president partner chose not to perform some of the university's role expectations.

Role conflict was also evident in the study with regard to race relations. There were accounts of ethnic minority female presidential partners who had experienced racial discrimination as well as religious and cultural discrimination. As one presidential partner who was at a predominantly White university stated, *"It hasn't been easy. We were not prepared for the cultural and religious discrimination."* [442]

One Latina presidential partner who was at a predominantly White university shared her experience with White Regents who questioned her abilities to perform the traditional role expectations. *“Yes, ...I was asked in a condensing or patronizing way ‘Are you ready to take on the role?’ and of course I said that I was. I already had my doctorate and I knew I had good people skills.”* [213]

There were experiences of role conflict with the male presidential partner’s experiences with their positionality and the perception of power associated with the president. For example, one male presidential partner shared his decision not to cultivate local friends and serve on local boards after he experienced negative experiences with positionality and the perception of power. *“It’s hard to make friends here because of my wife’s work. You do not know if there are hidden agendas so we do not make friends here.... I do not want to serve on boards where there is a link to my wife.”* [58-60]

The openly gay presidential partner experienced role conflict when the presidential partner’s support group rejected him. He had decided to attend the meeting but the female presidential partners present made it known that they did not accept him in the role of being a presidential partner. *“I went to one meeting (presidential partner support groups). I didn’t feel welcomed. It was an uncomfortable place to be. I was the only male and it became obvious that I was gay. They were cold and unfriendly towards me.”* [923]

There were role conflicts with social class when the ethnic minority presidential partners were not accepted or acknowledged by the community’s ethnic minority social elite. For example, one Latina presidential partner who was at a predominantly Hispanic

university was perplexed on why she was not accepted by the powerful Latino elite in the community. *“The ‘elite’ in this particular community were very clannish... They are wealthy and powerful... I don’t know why we were not included...(pause). In fact, we were told that if we had been White, then perhaps we would have been invited to join them... I guess we weren’t good enough to be in that group.”* [1081-1085]

In the following paragraphs I will discuss how role conflicts continued within the context of role ambiguity, role malintegration, role discontinuity, role overload, and role taking.

*Role Ambiguity.* The study showed no change from previous research on the information about ambiguous university role expectations for presidential partners. Presidential partners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, were unsure what was expected of them. As one male presidential partner observed when asked about his role expectations, *“It was not clear to me what was the presidential spouse’s role and its part in the institutional culture.”* [514] Female presidential partners reported that the information they received from the Regents was general, vague, and ambiguous.

The male presidential partners were unaware that the support they were providing for their partner was part of the university’s traditional role expectations. For example, two of the expectations were to assist with fundraising and entertaining. One male presidential partner stated that he did not conduct any of the traditional role expectations; however, as the interview progressed he revealed that he helped his partner with fundraising and entertaining. *“I help her with fundraising activities. I do not take a primary role, I leave that to my wife, and entertaining here and off campus.”* [47] The

male presidential partners were performing the patriarchal expectation of a supportive and stable marriage by attending college events with their partner. The presidential partners stated that they never received any clear direction or descriptions of what role expectations they were expected to perform.

*Role Malintegration.* There were roles that conflicted with the personality or the cultural diversity of the presidential partners. For some of the presidential partners, they could not perform specific university or community role expectations. All but two of the presidential partners were not comfortable with public speaking events. There were three presidential partners who tried to avoid performing certain public functions such as riding in open convertibles in parades, socializing with people whom they shared no common political or social values, or assuming a social role they felt uncomfortable performing.

For example, one presidential partner stated, *“One challenge I have faced is always being ‘up’ for events. People try to have long conversations with you at events that are mostly chatting and mingling and you’re not able to do that. It gets tiring.”* [852-853]

One presidential partner expressed their discomfort in having to perform the role of a gregarious and social presidential partner, which was the opposite of their personality. *“...the greatest challenges I face are being social. I am an introvert.... They expect me to be sociable, gregarious, articulate, and a good conversationalist. I feel that I have to constantly perform a role that isn’t me. It’s very painful.”* [921-922]

For two of the male presidential partners, their role malintegration was associated with their personal political and social values. They understood that they needed to refrain from discussing politics in social settings; however, the university guests, Regents, alumni, and benefactors did not refrain from discussing their political views and therefore creating great discomfort. For example, one partner made the following statement. *“It is unfortunate that the community we live in is the opposite of my political and social values. Therefore I have difficulty dealing with bigots and political fanatics because I have to remain quiet and not say anything. I want to support my wife.”* [413]

One male presidential partner in the study paused for quite a long time before he responded to my inquiry of his recent social event with the President of the United States. *“I normally would not have the opportunity to meet these people outside my role. And although I may not necessarily agree with the President, we have been to the White House.”* [546]

Another example would be the Asian American presidential partner referred to previously who was ethnically and culturally different from the community and experienced hostile actions from the community in forms of hate mail and death threats.

*Role Discontinuity.* Role discontinuity occurred when the presidential partner had to continue to perform the university role expectations that made them feel uncomfortable or exposed them to people and events they did not enjoy meeting or attending. As stated earlier the Regents and community members continued to expect the presidential partner, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, to accompany the president to college-related events, host and entertain university guests, to assist with

fundraising and to substitute for the president. However, for the presidential partners who did not feel comfortable performing the role expectations or had additional responsibilities with children and a career, the presidential couple created a priority code that helped determine which events and activities were essential or not. For example, one presidential partner described their priority code. *“As a result of my career obligations and the huge number of events she had to attend, we came up with three categories: One was ‘absolutely need to be there’; Two, ‘I’d like you to be there but it’s optional’; and, Three was ‘totally optional.’”* [379]

*Role Overload.* The female presidential partners were pressured to conform to the several of the university’s role expectations regardless of their full-time employment, family obligations, and long distance commuting relationships. One presidential partner responded when asked what their greatest challenge was, *“...keeping everything balanced and not getting enough sleep (smiling).”* [356]

One presidential partner sent me a sample of her week’s activities and there was not a single free night except for three hours on a Sunday evening, *“Time management is a challenge. Juggling the multiple commitments that appear on the calendar.... Weekends are busier than weeknights especially for entertaining and events. Just this Saturday we had 2 events to attend.”* [605-607]

There were universities that expected the presidential partner to perform all of the role expectations without any assistance, which resulted in physical exhaustion. In the following example one respondent described activities they engaged in at their first university. *“Before we had that person, I was responsible for sending out invitations,*

*creating the guests lists and seating charts, setting up the tables and decorations, and at times even cooking for large parties. It was exhausting.” [700]*

The university and community contributed to the conflicts associated with role overload. The presidential partner found their calendars full with meetings, committees, and other activities. For example, a male presidential partner commented, *“It does get tiring...dealing with both calendars. There are times we have activities each night and weekend evenings. Downtime is harder to get.” [1257]*

### *Role Taking*

There were role performances that the presidential partner had to conduct. Taking the role or performing the role meant behaving in a certain manner under various circumstances and environments. For example, one presidential partner commented on being pressured to behave in a particular manner, *“Yes, I’ve had those uncomfortable moments (laughing). Graduation luncheon. It’s quite a formal affair and as the presidential spouse I was supposed to do elaborate signals that would tell the wait staff to serve the next course. Well, it was so elaborate and confusing, the Interim president’s wife helped me as I was messing up with these silent signals.” [480]*

The presidential partner was expected to behave as a sophisticated, educated, gracious, and discreet individual who appeared comfortable with the upper-middle and upper class. It was a role one male presidential partner resented having to take. *“The third challenge is to act dumb and quiet in the background and being nice.” [427]*

For other presidential partners, their role taking was demonstrated with their apparel, where they were seen, and with whom. One female presidential partner

expressed her challenge of hosting and looking the part for socializing among the elite. “...*There is also other pressure to be recognized and ‘be seen’ in the community. There is a local magazine called [Society Circles] that comes out monthly and it’s important to be seen in that magazine if you want to be effective in promoting the university in the community.*” [1114]

From my field notes I observed that all the presidential partners were polite, well dressed, and displayed excellent manners. Even when casually dressed, the respondents projected poise and confidence. The presidential partners I interviewed appeared cognizant of their public image and behaved accordingly.

I observed one presidential partner from a short distance and observed a different body language and facial expression when they thought I was no longer present. For that presidential partner it confirmed their earlier comment that they did not feel comfortable in their role of presidential partner and living in a public “fishbowl.” [OC 301]

### *Significant Findings*

There were several significant findings from this study.

1. The female presidential partner was still expected to conduct the patriarchal traditional role expectations based on her gender and regardless of her career. Therefore, the presidential partnership was conducted as a duo-career, when a

partner worked on their career and supported their partner's career simultaneously, instead of the traditional "2 for the price of 1" career.

2. Male presidential partners did have four primary traditional role expectations to perform. These role expectations were based on a patriarchal, stable, and supportive relationship rather than the traditional role expectations that females had been expected to perform.
3. The primary reason for the female presidential partner to maintain her professional career was for financial security.
4. The ethnicity of the presidential partner was a significant factor when they were at a White dominated university.
5. Generally, the socially elite community regardless of their gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation accepted most of the presidential partners.
6. Presidential partners were encouraged to align or associate with the social elite for fundraising purposes.
7. Universities have failed to progress in demonstrating support for the presidential partner with compensation and/or recognition, regardless of the partner's gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

#### *Additional Research Findings*

The research study was an exciting journey into an unknown world of privileged people. Acquaintances provided me with their stereotyped perceptions of university

presidential partners hosting afternoon tea parties. (See poem at introduction to *Chapter II Literature Review*.) Any expectations of a lifestyle with little stress and few demands as a presidential partner were shattered with the first interview.

The lives of the presidential partners were busy with hosting, entertaining, fundraising, family responsibilities, working as a volunteer, working outside the home, maintaining the home, supporting their partner, and serving on a variety of committees and meetings held off and on campus. The list was endless. I had anticipated the university's traditional role expectations intersecting with the presidential partner's ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, positionality, and/or social class. However, I had not realized the extent of the respondent's experiences under a variety of circumstances. I will list and discuss these additional research findings in the remainder of the chapter.

Additional research findings:

1. The importance of negotiating the presidential partner's career
2. The male presidential partner and their issues with masculinity and gender conflict
3. Flirtatious females: Unsolicited attention from female Regents
4. Training manuals that reinforce university patriarchy
5. Compensating the work of the presidential partner
6. Profile of the active presidential partner: Females
7. National presidential partner support groups
8. The ethnic minority female presidential partners who wanted to be a university president

## 9. The presidential partner's institutional cultures

In the following section, the additional research findings were presented with accompanying narratives from the presidential partners and one university president.

### *Additional Research Findings I*

#### The Importance of Negotiating the Presidential Partner's Career

There were a significant number of presidential partners, 17 out of 24, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, who revealed that they were not part of the interviewing process when their partner, the president, was being interviewed for the presidency.

In addition, the president had not inquired about the presidential partner's role expectations or negotiated employment or personnel support for the presidential partner. One presidential partner reflected. *"It never occurred to him to ask about me. I do not know if they spoke about my role."* [264]

The consequence of not including the presidential partner in the interviewing process created a conflict between the presidential couple and the patriarchal culture of the university. Four presidential partners -- two female and two male -- provided the following narratives. First were the female presidential partner's experiences.

One presidential partner was concerned about her career. *"The Regents understood that I was leaving a very good job and salary. They actually stated in my partner's contract that they would help me transition into a new job... I wish to continue working. If not in my previous career than I have to consider an alternative career...I am also finding it difficult to transfer to related industry locally because either my*

*husband sits on the related Regents or the university has a close relationship to the other institution.” [436, 946] At the time of the interview the presidential partner had not been successful in acquiring employment and the university had not assisted her “transition into a new job.”*

Another presidential partner shared their frustrations. *“During the first year, we decided that I would not teach. We decided that I would become involved with the community and university. That was a difficult time for me. I did not know what my role was. I enjoyed being here and people were so warm and gracious to me. However, I still felt like this was his job, not my job. I was just here to support him. I missed teaching so much...Many times I felt like I was in the Federal Witness Protection Program where I came to a community and I had to change my identity. I went from teacher in a community I felt was home and now I was in a new place, new job, and new people. It was hard adjusting.” [806, 808, 809-810, 816] In this example, the presidential partner experienced role conflicts with role ambiguity, role discontinuity, role overload, role taking, and role malintegration. If the presidential partner had had clearer instructions or a job description the presidential partner may have been able to avert such conflicts.*

Next were the male presidential partners and the difficulties they faced. *“My wife’s institution has not been supportive of my professional career. I met with local people who promised to help me find employment but nothing resulted from those discussions. At the second university they spoke of trying to help me find something (employment) but they did not come through. I had to quit my job to join her.... The biggest hurdle has been dual careers. I really liked my job and I have not been happy at*

*work since.... if we should move again, next time we will be adamant about finding me a position.” [383, 391, 392, 410, 434] At the time of this interview, the presidential partner was unemployed.*

The final example came from a male presidential partner. *“The Regents did state that due to a conflict of interest, I would not be able to teach at their university. The Regents would instead put out some feelers into the community in which they did. I had three interviews. At first I found a non-tenure track position, in another city two hours away, but then I was able to finally find and accept a tenure track position. This position has been good for me. But at first it was really rough. When I did move here I had a harder time adjusting. ...I wonder if other presidential partners have had the same problems with adjusting. I’m wondering if there are others dealing with these issues of career and maintaining a relationship.” [902-904, 909]*

One presidential partner echoed the sentiments of many professional career university presidential partners. *“In the next presidency, I would negotiate a tenure-track faculty position at the same institution.” [139] The presidential partner recognized that negotiation was the solution to avoid role conflicts.*

A presidential partner had learned from a previous experience and shared these suggestions for negotiating the presidential partner’s role. *“My opinion is that there needs to be a conversation with the Board about expectations and for the discussion to be explicit in details during the interviewing process....there needs to be a discussion of specifics. Does the Board expect the spouse to help with fund-raising, attendance at athletic events, commencements, etc.? Get the details....It’s important that potential*

*presidential partnerships speak with other couples and find out what's it really like. The gender of the president does not matter.... Some couples remain in urban communities where there are several universities and both can maintain their careers. In a rural community, the number of universities may limit the availability of maintaining an academic career. What is important to understand is that a person does not apply unless they want that president's position. They have the drive and ambition to be president and they need to talk with their spouse and decide as a family whether they want to maintain both careers and how they will do it. They need to think about the children if they are still at home."* [1236-1237, 1241-1245]

#### *Additional Research Findings 2*

##### **Males and Their Issues with Masculinity and Gender Conflict**

*Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would be a presidential partner. It was not on my radar screen."* [510]

The presidential partner spoke with a sense of humor as we began the conversation about his role as the presidential partner. He was one of two presidential partners who spoke with a positive attitude about their role. The respondent and another presidential partner had retired voluntarily shortly after their partner became president.

For three of the six male presidential partners, their lives were riddled with frustrations and high levels of emotion. I listened to the (White) respondents' frank comments and observed their expressions of frustrations of being in a role they had never anticipated. The conflict these White male presidential partners were experiencing stemmed from performing what they thought were women's roles. The male presidential partners did not want to assume or integrate into a role that had been traditionally

identified as the woman's role. I guess the male presidential partners thought if they performed these women's roles they would become emasculated.

I learned during the interviews that these White male presidential partners had no interest in performing any of the university's traditional role expectations. What I did not expect was to hear a stern tone of voice from two of the men. Terse is a close approximation of how I would describe the tone of voice. Their voices were deliberate, strong and emotional. Evidently I had touched a nerve--a nerve linked to their ego and masculinity.

As I continued to interview the male presidential partners, I discovered their frustrations of being unemployed, inability to voice their honest opinions in public, the loneliness and separation from friends, and the experience of sexist behavior from others. Some of the more compelling comments include, "*I sometimes struggle with the issue of male and female support roles, like earning an income. I'm just use to the man should also work...call me old fashioned.*" [403] This was an example of gender conflict. The presidential partner had a specific image of what his role was as a man and he was unable to perform it.

The male presidential partners, who had not planned to retire for 20 years, were not as concerned about their careers as a source of financial security; rather their career and livelihood were their identity as a man. From one male presidential partner who tried to make a career adjustment, "*Before I had been a tenured professor and people respected my opinions. But now, nothing. I had been uprooted from an academic community I enjoyed as well as from family and friends. It became so difficult....*" [908]

One respondent decided not to seek employment at the university because of potential conflicts of interest. However he expressed his frustration at not utilizing his knowledge and skills and his identity as the breadwinner. *“I also have an avocation of buying and selling stocks on the Internet so I have my own office in this house. That helps contribute income to the marriage.”* [49]

Another White presidential partner resented having to refrain from speaking his mind, especially when others who had strong personal and political opinions confronted him. *“It is unfortunate that the community we live in is the opposite of my political and social values. Therefore I have difficulty dealing with bigots and political fanatics because I have to remain quiet and not say anything. I want to support my wife... And, it really bothered me that US President Bush would kiss my wife. (Facial expression of disgust).”* [413-414] The inability for the presidential partner to candidly express his opinions without fear of reprisal against his partner was a major frustration.

Another example of conflict was when male faculty members tried to use the male presidential partner to influence the president. In this study, the faculty members were always male. The presidential partners resented the idea that faculty thought that they would use him to influence the president. The male presidential partners quickly took action.

One presidential partner recalled how he handled the situation, *“When I first got here, there was a faculty member that spoke to me about his department and some problems they were having and how it could be fixed. I asked him why he was telling me all this and he responded that I could relay the information to my wife. I told him, “I*

*don't do relay. If you have something to discuss with her, you talk to her, not me. I don't get into her stuff." I must have nipped that in the bud because it hasn't happened again."* [541]

### *Additional Research Findings 3*

#### Flirting Females: Unsolicited Attention from Female Regents

The next finding from the research study was the unsolicited behavioral incidents associated with women who consistently flirted with the male presidential partners. The first comment made was spoken with hesitation and uncertainty and we both laughed at the idea that it was actually happening. I remember how the conversation started on this topic. *"I find that with the female guests, they love my title."* [412] The presidential partner mentioned how female Regents and guests would approach him and compliment him on his support of his partner, the president.

I decided to casually ask the remaining male presidential partners about unsolicited attention and discovered that it had happened to four of the male presidential partners, including the openly gay presidential partner. One partner brought it up in our conversation, *"And let me tell you about the women. They liked meeting me (embarrassed laughing). I think they like meeting me and commenting how much they appreciated me supporting her career."* [517]

At another interview the presidential partner expressed surprise at the behavior of the female Regents, *"I have noticed that when I do attend these events with the Regents, that the women will be very friendly towards me...almost flirtatious. I do not understand that."* [916] The descriptions of the women's behavior included smiling and laughter

associated with flirting but also physical touching, the woman's hand touching the man's arm.

The public behavior of the female Regents made the male presidential partners uncomfortable. One presidential partner and I discussed his experiences extensively and he wondered why female donors and Regents, who knew he was not available, would be behaving this way. At first I was unsure how to analyze the behavior conducted by the female Regents. One thought I had was that the men had misinterpreted the women's behavior and what they were saying.

I learned when I read Ribeiro, Paul, and Nogueira (2007) that when women observed men taking a non-traditional role (i.e. presidential partner) and observed those men supporting their partner in a position that was formerly held by men (i.e. presidency), the women often complimented the men multiple times and the men in turn enjoyed the attention.

Ribeiro, Paul, and Nogueira (2007) observed that Portuguese men in their later years were taking care of their wives who were unable to physically take care of themselves. These men were placed in the position to assume the roles that had traditionally been held for women such as cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping, and doing laundry. The men stated they were obligated to take this role because of their marriage commitment and love for their wife. The men stated that if the situations were reversed their wives would be taking care of them and engaging in the same activities. Their masculinity was not threatened because they were in control of protecting and taking care of their wife. "More than being in a feminine role, the men demonstrated that

care-giving was an important and significant role, one they had adopted by virtue of martial obligations and from which they derived some sense of worth and, almost paradoxically, reaffirmed their sense of masculinity” (Ribeiro, Paul, & Nogueira 2007).

Juxtaposing Ribeiro, Paul, and Nogueira’s research with my findings regarding the actions of the “flirtatious” females revealed that perhaps what the presidential partners were experiencing was genuine praise by the female Regents for the respondent’s support for their partner and nothing else. That explanation seemed possible since all of the male presidential partners stated how proud they were of their partner’s achievements. I sensed from all the respondents a commitment and love for their partners.

More than one presidential partner defined their role as protecting their partner from working long hours and being overwhelmed by guests, and stepping in for the partner when they were overbooked or unable to give speeches. *“The pace of my wife’s work has been a challenge. I had not expected the time and energy she has had to exert as the president. I have a tremendous respect and admiration for her work. I try to support her with her traveling, engagements, and commitments and it continues to be a physical challenge.”* [549-550]

#### *Additional Research Findings 4*

##### Training Manuals that Reinforced University Patriarchy

More than one presidential partner inquired about a training manual for presidential partners. These presidential partners had lamented the frustration of the first

year's experiences and having no clue as to what they were doing as the presidential partner.

Before the study, no manuals were found. However, shortly after the study began, three training manuals were discovered: *Insights: A guide for presidents' and chancellors' partners edited and revised, 2001 revised and edited edition* (NASULGC, 2001) and *Presidential Spouse 101: My Spouse is a college president—now what do I do?* (Council of Independent Colleges, n.d.). As I reviewed the manuals, I learned that these documents were outdated. In particular, the manuals reaffirmed the traditional patriarchal role expectations, briefly acknowledged professional career partners, and were not written for males, ethnic minorities, or GLBT presidential partners.

Although the manuals were outdated, four presidential partners requested a guide to what to expect during the first years as the presidential partner. One presidential partner recalled their first year's experience. *"It's been trial and error. There really wasn't anything available to help me. I was not given any guidelines at either university. The first university gave me a list of events I would need to attend or host such as a ladies tea, high school girls luncheon, receptions for the retirees, and various other events at the president's house. That was it."* [713-714]

In retrospect, a manual would have given one Latina presidential partner an advantage in working with the university staff. "Unfortunately, sometimes the staff assigned to help you may not want to do certain tasks and may not be forthcoming about the level of their involvement and may want you to do it instead. A guidebook would have been helpful." [236]

*Additional Research Findings 5*

Compensating the Work of the Presidential Partner

In previous research studies, the majority of the presidential partners had stated that they did not want to be financially compensated (Ostar, 1983; Clodius & McGrath, 1984, Pratt, 2004). I interviewed older female presidential partners (over the age of 55) who had that same opinion. The primary reasons given were because they did not want to be tied to a structured work schedule and lose their flexibility. *“I would not want to be paid for being a presidential spouse because it would create expectations.”* [886] Money was not the issue for these presidential partners.

Later, I interviewed five presidential partners who wanted to be compensated for their university work. The female presidential partners refused to conform to the traditional role expectations unless they were compensated. I observed one respondent’s partner provide his opinion on compensating the presidential partner. *“The respondent’s partner felt strongly that the respondent should be paid for her work. The president does not agree that it is a “2 for the price of 1” presidency. The respondent’s husband stated that some presidents do not make anything close in salary, perks, and benefits to what other university presidents made especially as seen with private and land-grant universities.”* [OC182-183]

I asked a respondent who was highly successful in her university work and required to perform the university’s traditional role expectations without being compensated what she thought would be a reasonable salary for her university work. *“Hmm, reasonable.... (Thinking)...In this community...a reasonable salary would be*

*\$150,000 per year with a budget for travel, conferences. I would need an assistant to help me with the entertaining and hosting. Of course a car and an entertaining budget plus a bonus for development. Remember that other development officers receive bonuses when they bring in lots of money for the university, so why shouldn't I?" [1138-1139]*

Two presidential partners preferred to receive a clothing budget or entertainment budget to offset the expense of maintaining a wardrobe for gala events. Four presidential partners had extensive evening galas to attend on a weekly basis and felt the pressure of maintaining an appropriate wardrobe among the social elites at these fundraising events. One presidential partner observed, *"We hosted royalty, U. S. Presidents, and other famous people. We also appeared on national television and when we had local celebrations, we were invited to numerous ball and galas... In one of our communities, we had many galas and sometimes we had 10 black tie events per month. I had to buy a lot of necessary clothes for these events."* [664, 676]

Another presidential partner knew that she had to promote the university in the community and faced the same financial issue of the wardrobe. *"There is also pressure to be recognized and 'be seen' in the community. There is a local magazine called [High Society] that comes out monthly and it's important to be seen in that magazine if you want to be effective in promoting the university in the community.... Now in this community, it's very fashion conscious. I know that one evening dress I wear today, I will not be able to wear it again for another year. That is how clothes conscious this community is."* [1114-1119]

Compensation was requested to offset the costs of taking the role of a university presidential partner in a community that focused on gala events. The other theme in this finding was the importance of appearance and the message it conveyed. Referring to Goffman (1966), the attire was just one of the many props needed in their performance as the university presidential partner.

#### *Additional Research Findings 6*

##### Profile of the Active Presidential Partner: Female

The respondents were at times direct in explaining their reasons for taking an active role as the presidential partner and at times it was demonstrated by their actions. The examples and commentary made during the scheduled interviews, my observations, and the two presidential partners I accompanied for short periods of time developed into four general themes or factors that empowered the presidential partners to perform the active role of the university presidential partner beyond entertaining, hosting, fundraising, and attending college events.

These four factors that created the profile of the active presidential partner were university and presidential support, commitment for diversity, learning from others, and a commitment to service. These factors intersected with taking advantage of the power, prestige and positionality of being the presidential partner and having a previous career involving students (e.g. taught college students, student counselor, taught K-12). The university's supports for the presidential partners to perform their traditional role expectations were discussed earlier. The following discussion elaborates on the

presidential partner's commitment for diversity, learning from others, and commitment to service.

*Commitment for Diversity.* Diversity was defined as an understanding and appreciation for the characteristics and beliefs of those who demonstrated a wide range of characteristics. This included ethnic and racial backgrounds, age, physical and cognitive abilities, family status, lifestyle preferences, socioeconomic status, religious and spiritual values, and geographic location.

The presidential partners who stood out in their accomplishments demonstrated a commitment for diversity. One White female presidential partner expressed her commitment for diversity in the university and community. *"...my projects are centered on campus climate. Making sure that the students feel the university is for them... At the first presidency, I decided that I would help women in a male dominated community... It's rewarding when I see programs that he or we start and then see them come to fruition and see the impact they make in the university and for our students."* [706-708-731]

My observations when accompanying the White female presidential partner became more specific as I was able to assess the level of her commitments for diversity. *"The respondent understands that she has a certain level of power and influence as the presidential partner and will use it to further develop their careers as a presidential couple but also do positive things for their university and community... Respondent stated that she was committed to promoting ethnic diversity and will work on restructuring Black History Month and Women's Month schedule and events..."*

*Respondent recognizes that community has segregated neighborhoods and will work to bring more of the community to campus and will support programs that will provide outreach to the ethnically diverse communities.” [OC 180-202-203]*

When I had been making these observations the respondent had been discussing how she used her positionality to further her projects with the support from the Regents and her partner, the president. During the week that I was accompanying the presidential partner we drove to the segregated side of town. The presidential partner commented that the university had numerous ethnic and cultural activities scheduled in four days whereas she knew that at other universities the ethnic and cultural activities were normally celebrated over the academic year. Her new leadership initiative was to form a student and faculty task force and develop plans to celebrate ethnic and cultural celebrations over the academic year or at least longer than four days. These activities would be reflective of the student and faculty diversity at the university and community.

One final example of a presidential partner committed for diversity was a White male presidential partner. This presidential partner continued with his leadership project despite the community culture, *“I worked with a nationally recognized organization that includes helping minority inner city kids. I have worked on their board and helped develop their vision statements. Of course, given the history of this community, I found that there was some community resistance to helping this organization because some of the people helped are minorities.” [1001]*

*Learning from Others.* One presidential partner who demonstrated strong university work credits her observations of another presidential partner who inspired her,

with an interesting twist. *“I have learned many things from observing other presidential partners. For example, one presidential partner was abusive of her power as a presidential partner and it was difficult to maintain a positive relationship with her. Observing her behavior helped me decide how I wanted to treat the university faculty and employees and also how I wanted to interact with the community when my husband became a president.”* [695]

Another presidential partner stated that when she attended her first national conference for university presidents and their partners she met her future mentor, a university presidential partner. The mentor encouraged her to forge a clearer vision of her own role. In a modest statement, the partner stated, *“I pick and choose my projects. I find myself back on a college campus but I do not have to take classes or write papers. So I can do what I want.”* [267] What this presidential partner had picked and chosen at the time of the study were women’s leadership issues, child development, alumni fundraising, and wellness programs for faculty and students.

*Commitment to Public Service.* The presidential partners that demonstrated active university work had a personal commitment to service. These presidential partners did not have one or two projects, they had numerous ones. Some projects were short-term and other projects were on-going years after their departure.

For example, one project was a short-term initiative. *“At a previous presidency I created its first cyber café in the student center.”* [694] The café was developed with a task force and then completed the following year. The next example became an on-going event. *“There were many projects that I started and I’m proud to say that after these*

*many years, the projects are still thriving... I started a fundraiser evening gala for the local health center. That activity has continued to grow and be successful.” [644-646]*

#### *Additional Research Findings 7*

##### National Presidential Partner Support Groups

Another finding in the study revealed that there existed information and support services provided by the national president’s association’s presidential partner support groups. After reviewing the websites and the manuals for dissemination among these organizations the role these organizations supported was conformity to the university’s patriarchal traditional role expectations.

Some presidential partners enjoyed attending the annual meetings and others did not find the meetings relevant to their needs. One male presidential partner had good things to say about the annual meetings. *“I found them tremendously helpful. Of course there are those sessions on make-up and fashion but you have to put up with some things. (Laughing) I attended sessions on leadership, responsibility, and learning from others.” [1015-1016]*

A career professional presidential partner described her first meeting, *“I went to the first meeting and they were teaching other partners about flower arrangements and I knew I was in the wrong place.” [126]*

A male presidential partner’s opinion, *“I prefer to attend some of the other meetings being offered at the same time that my wife attends simply because they interest me or are important to my wife’s work.... I do not wish to sound arrogant but I do not*

*think I 'need' to go to those meetings for presidential partners or even those for other male presidential partners.” [89-90]*

Another male perspective, *“I went to one meeting. I didn't feel welcomed. It was an uncomfortable place to be. I was the only male and it became obvious that I was gay. They were cold and unfriendly towards me.” [923]*

The following narrative illustrated the patriarchal culture of these presidential partner support groups and why some people, especially men, may not be receptive to the traditional format. *“At first the group learned about tenured faculty, then about how to dress, being nice to people but not too nice, and then decorating centerpieces. When we broke up and went to join our partners for lunch, someone escorted me to the table like I couldn't recognize my wife.” [430-431]*

One male presidential partner revealed his observation of the men in attendance at the presidential partner support meetings. *“Of the 60-80 female presidents that attend, only half are attached that go to the meeting. Of the other half that has a mate, ¼ of their husbands are retired. The other ¼ have a career. Those men met and publicly didn't think they needed to meet. However, quietly they said it was such a good idea and now we meet every summer. I think just being able to commiserate is just helpful.” [432]*

#### *Additional Research Findings 8*

##### *The Ethnic Minority Female Presidential Partners Who wanted to be President*

There were four ethnic minority female presidential partners who revealed that they had wanted to be a university president. They all expressed the same statement. *“I*

*never thought I would become a presidential partner. Actually I thought I would become a college president....” [101]*

I returned to my data and field notes to make sense of the four female presidential partners and compared them to the other presidential partners to make an assessment of what was different. There were some differences from the others. All four were female and ethnic minorities. Three of these female presidential partners were employed outside the home and worked more than 40 hours a week, in administrative level positions, and in their chosen profession. The four presidential partners had their doctorates in various educational fields; were active in their partner’s college activities and in their professional careers.

I referred back to the female presidential partners in my research recommendations in *Chapter V* because the question “why did these presidential partners not pursue the presidency?” needed to be researched.

#### *Additional Research Findings 9*

##### The Presidential Partner’s Institutional Culture

There were problems with two presidential partners who tried to perform the primary role expectations for their partner’s university. The problems stemmed from the presidential partners working for one college and the partner, the president, working for a different university.

In the first example, a male presidential partner experienced so much conflict that he decided to terminate any university work on behalf of his wife’s university. The experience resulted in his loss of employment for political reasons indirectly associated

with his wife's university. *"In some communities my profession can be perceived as being politically charged because of the population served and the way it is funded... Unfortunately, a powerful Regent demanded I be removed from the campus facility (wife's university) or my wife would be fired. So I was forced to move my office, which was paid for by a different institution, from the campus."* [390]

The following experience influenced the presidential partner's decision to limit additional university work because of the punitive actions taken against her by the respondent's employer. The presidential partner's college was located in the same sprawling urban community as her husband's university. Many times the presidential couple was attending the same conferences representing their respective employers and the respondent would be forced by her employer to use vacation time. *"Unfortunately, my place of employment has not been supportive in my dual roles. If I have to attend a university function, I have to take vacation time. If I am a few minutes late because I was at a university function across town, I have to report those minutes as vacation time. If my husband and I have to attend an event where we represent our respective institutions, I have to take vacation because I am his partner."* [113]

### *Discussion on Significant Findings*

The research findings were significant and the most troubling findings were the presidential partner's heartfelt and tragic experiences that demonstrated an arrogance and lack of support by the governing boards (Regents) to the university presidential

partner and their partnership with the president. I found that the stressful experiences were a result of being marginalized by the mindset of a conservative patriarchal university. Some of these presidential partners were forced to compromise their careers and their personal freedom.

The most poignant findings were with the lack of support for the presidential partner's career and the university's role expectations. These two findings will be discussed separately and then followed by recommendations for the university and college governing boards.

The first discussion centers on the Regents' lack of support and respect for the presidential partner's career. This lack of support resulted in long-term emotional, financial, psychological, and/or career-changing devastation. Devastation? Yes, absolutely. From my observation codes, I recorded, "*I shall never forget how helpless I felt when some of the presidential partners cried in my presence because of their loss or change in their career and employment status.*" [OC 412]

Although universities re-assured presidential partners they would assist in finding them employment, the research findings showed that the Regents failed to keep their word. Such inaction by the Regents caused some presidential partners to experience a loss of self-confidence, wages, retirement benefits, tenured status (when appropriate), and major life-altering career changes.

The second finding that was troubling from a feminist perspective was the continued double standard of role expectations from the Regents. This study demonstrated that regardless of gender, ethnicity, employment status, and sexual

orientation, all presidential partners were expected by the university and Regents to perform four primary traditional role expectations: however, the female presidential partners performed multiple role expectations, far more than the male presidential partners.

Regardless of the disclaimers by universities that they had no role expectations of the university presidential partner, this research study proved that there were role expectations for all presidential partnerships. As stated by the respondents, these role expectations did not appear at first but the expectations become evident as the presidency progressed. Not only were the presidential partner pressured to perform these expectations but their partner, the President, was also pressured to force their partner to comply.

The research findings revealed that such forced compliance to the university's traditional role expectations caused frustration, anxiety and compromise from the presidential partner. Not only does this type of pressure demonstrate a callous patriarchal university culture, it also demonstrates the Regents willingness to interfere with the President's personal relationship with their partner. Therefore, in addition to the Regents meddling in the presidential partner's career, they were also meddling in their personal lives.

These research findings demonstrate a call for change. University governing boards need to make a transition from their traditional patriarchal role expectations of the university presidential partner to more androgynous role expectations. The four

primary role expectations identified in this study could be used to begin important discussions with the governing boards about dual career presidential partnerships.

These discussions may not be well received. More than one presidential partner in this study thought changing the mindset of the patriarchal university and Regents would be impossible.

Can change happen? It must, there is no choice because of the continual emerging diversity of university presidential partnerships. Four poignant examples of diversified presidential partnerships occurred in 2007, which demonstrate these changes in leadership. The first example was the departure of President Laurence H. Summers from Harvard after insulting female faculty; and, the subsequent appointment of Harvard's first-ever female president, Drew Gilpin Faust (Rimer, 2007). The second example was the appointment of the first female Indian Chancellor and president of the University of Houston System, Renu Khator (Treasaugue, 2007). The third example of diverse presidential partnerships was Cynthia E. Huggins, an openly gay female president and her partner, Laurel, at the University of Maine at Machias (Fain, 2007b). The final example was the announcement of the first Latina president at Texas A&M University in College Station (Hacker & Davis, 2007). These changes at the university helm demonstrate that presidents who represent diversity based on their gender, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation are replacing traditional patriarchal leaderships. In addition, the faculty and students are heralding these diverse presidential partnerships.

It is imperative that the governing boards realize that these patriarchal role expectations do not reflect well with their faculty and students. Faculty and students are diverse and reflect the diversity in the community and the nation.

If universities and governing boards want to attract and retain the brightest and most successful leaders; attract and retain faculty and students; then, they will need to change their mindset of the presidential partners, specifically the partner's career demands and the university role expectations. How can this be accomplished?

First, governing boards need to re-examine their policies and investigate newer methods to guarantee employment and tenured faculty appointment (when appropriate) for the presidential partner. If university policy prevents such employment assistance at that university, then the university needs to guarantee securing employment or financially compensating the financial loss by the presidential partner for the damage made to their career. In other words, if the University cannot secure employment comparable to the career the presidential partner was leaving behind, and then the university should financially compensate the presidential partner for that loss in salary, retirement pensions, perks and benefits. Drastic? Of course not, such assurances for an outstanding president are all part of the negotiation process and commonplace in the business world.

Governing boards also need to re-examine their role expectations of the presidential partner and recognize the covert and implied actions by the university and Regents in forcing the presidential partners to perform the role expectations. It is likely that the presidential partner may want to attend some college events with their partner

(i. e. partner's investiture, meeting the Queen of England, dinner with the Pope, events recognizing partner) but it should be recognized as truly optional and not required. If any role expectations were required, especially fundraising, such expectations should be negotiated and part of the formal presidential hiring process.

If the presidential partner and the university negotiate and agree to make the presidential partner perform various role expectations, there should be a formal contractual agreement of compensation that includes a salary, pension, and benefits as a minimum. Currently, 53% of university presidents spend each day working on fundraising (Tresaugue, 2007, p. 3) and if the Regents expect the presidential partner to accompany and/or take any role in fundraising as they currently do, then the presidential partner should be compensated.

Although changing the traditional practice at these patriarchal institutions and governing boards will take time, it needs to start now. This research study demonstrates that these issues have existed for several years and that the majority of the presidential partners want change.

Such change needs to begin at the top with educating the governing boards of the immense contributions made by the presidential partner and their responsibility to recognize, respect, and compensate (when appropriate) the presidential partner, regardless of gender, ethnicity, social status, and sexual orientation. The governing boards also need to become cognizant of how the traditional patriarchal role expectations have undermined the presidential partner's well being and career as well as the presidential partner's personal relationship with the President.

In addition, the governing boards should work with their national association beginning with the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), in developing guidelines and/or standards that reflect the prestige and respect accorded to the university president's partner (formerly known as The First Lady). These potential AGB sanctioned guidelines would be used by the governing boards, presidential partnerships, and contract negotiating agents to insure the inclusion of the presidential partner as part of the presidential hiring and negotiating process. Until the governing boards become the change agents, female presidential partners will continue to be treated as second-class citizens and other presidential partners will continue to be marginalized.

### *Summary*

*Chapter IV* presented the research findings from the study and a discussion of two specific inequities based on gender and dual careers and the university's patriarchal perspective. An array of experiences by the university presidential partners contributed to answering the research questions. In addition to the research study there were additional findings that contributed to the context of the research. As a consequence of the significant findings in the study and the severe lack of research on the topic of university presidential partner, there were a substantial number of research recommendations presented in *Chapter V*.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*I drove into the parking lot and the security officer ran toward me and told me that I could not park there. I told him I was there to interview the presidential partner, Dr. Mr. Calder. “No, you mean Dr. Mrs. Calder, the university president,” he replied. He seemed use to correcting people’s assumptions that the president was male. “No, I actually do mean Mr. Calder, the husband of Dr. Mrs. Calder,” I replied. “No,” he said, “Dr. Mr. Calder isn’t the president. Dr. Mrs. Calder is the president.” “Yes, I understand that,” I replied. Then I sighed and carefully said, “I am here to meet with Thurston Hyde Calder, the husband of the university president. He told me I could park here. Can you point out their home for me?” He shook his head with a look of tempered frustration and said, “Okay, but you’re going to be disappointed when you find out you’re meeting with the wrong Dr. Calder.” I laugh when I remember that encounter and no, I was not disappointed.*

### *Summary*

The research study was conducted to learn how the university's patriarchal role expectations affected select university presidential partners. The study was composed of a purposive sampling with 24 university presidential partners. There were eighteen female and six male respondents. Fifteen respondents were White, three were African American, four were Latinas, and two were Asian American. There were four interracial heterosexual partnerships and one same-sex partnership.

The presidential partners represented nine major state universities, eight influential regional universities, and seven urban universities. Two of the universities were Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and two were predominantly Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).

There were significant differences between this study and previous research studies. The findings illustrated that there were an increased number of dual career presidential partners; a diversity of ethnic minorities; an inclusion of male presidential partners; an inclusion of interracial partnerships; an inclusion of an openly gay presidential partnership; an identification of the roles performed by the male presidential partners; and, the university's patriarchal bias with female and male presidential partners. In addition, this study was structured as a qualitative research study as opposed to previous quantitative studies.

The three types of universities, descriptors of the presidential houses (university owned and privately owned) and selective information about the respondents contributed

to the context of the study. In this study, presidential partners were either employed, retired or did not work outside the home.

A significant finding was the shift in the type of presidential partnerships. DiBiaggio's (1984) identification of the "duo-career" presidential couple (partner who works on their career and supports their partner's career simultaneously) replaced the two-person single career (2 for the price of 1) presidential partnership.

The role expectations of the university presidential partner were shaped by the context of the previous presidential partner, the patriarchal culture of the university and community, the presence (or absence) of a university presidential house, the community's relationship with the university, and the respondents' family commitments and career.

### *Summary of Research Questions*

This research study produced rich descriptive data that were able to answer the research questions. The research information was analyzed using qualitative research methods, and coded, and reported appropriately to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents.

#### *Research Question 1*

What are the traditional role expectations that presidential partners are expected to perform?

There was one document, a job description, created for AASCU, *Job description: Presidential spouse/associate of the president* (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n.d.) that provided a comprehensive description of the university's traditional role expectations. A copy of the job description document is available in Appendix A. The list of duties and responsibilities were written with the patriarchal assumption from the writers, association, and university that the duties would be performed by a female who did not work outside the home. It had been written with a traditional heterosexual couple with family in mind and not the male presidential partner or same sex presidential couple. Therefore the job description was indicative of the university's patriarchal culture.

#### *Research Question 2*

How are the university presidential partners influenced to perform the university's traditional role expectations?

The university and community's patriarchal structure influenced the university presidential partners to perform select role expectations based on the traditional roles performed by former presidential partners or based on the patriarchal perspective of a traditional heterosexual marriage. When the presidential partner was female, the role expectations were harder for the female presidential partners to overcome. However, when the university had a history of former female presidential partners who were employed or the absence of a female presidential partner, the university and community expressed less conformity to university work.

If the community and university were able to observe more ethnic and cultural diversity among previous university presidents, then the university and community were more receptive to non-traditional presidential partners.

All presidential partners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, employment status, or sexual orientation, were expected to perform the following four primary roles:

- Accompany the president to college related functions
- Host and entertain university guests
- Accompany and assist the president with fundraising functions
- Substitute for the president when appropriate

### *Research Question 3*

How does the university presidential partner perceive their ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation affecting the performance of their role expectations?

Overall, there were experiences that affected the performance of the presidential partner's university work that were based on their ethnicity or gender. The issue of sexual orientation as part of the research questions was considered before it was determined that there were not a significant number of openly gay presidential partners. However, the one openly gay presidential partner also had experiences that affected his performance of university work.

There were nine ethnic minorities in the study, African-Americans, Latinas, and Asian Americans. There were three out of the nine who spoke at great length about their experiences with racism. One presidential partner experienced hate mail and death threats. This presidential partner's reaction was to respond with outreach activities

educating the community and faculty regarding the diverse cultures, religions, and ethnicities that existed in their community and in the rest of the United States.

The remaining six ethnic minority presidential partners in the study did not perceive their ethnicity as a factor in their university work. However, it should be noted that two African American presidential partners were at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and one Latina presidential partner was at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSIs).

The perception among female presidential partners in the study was that the male presidential partners were not expected to conform to any of the university role expectations. This study showed that perception was not accurate. All six of the male presidential partners were expected to accompany their partner, the president, to university events; to host and entertain university guests; and, to accompany and assist their partner with fundraising. The presidential partners revealed that when asked they substituted for the president by attending functions, giving speeches, presiding over award presentations, and other activities.

Two of the male presidential partners were active in the community as volunteers with local charities. One presidential partner had difficulty in seeking and maintaining employment because of positionality and politics associated with their partner, the president.

One openly gay presidential partner agreed to be interviewed for the study. The respondent pool was not large enough to provide for a consensus and comparison. However, the respondent experienced rejection at the national president's associations'

presidential partner support group meeting because of the respondent's sexual orientation. Therefore, he terminated his attendance to the support group meetings due to the association's lack of support.

*Research Question 4*

How does the university presidential partner perceive social class affecting their role expectations?

Historically, university presidential partners were White, female, college educated, and represented the middle to upper-middle class. The majority of presidential partners during the time of this study were similar to the historical presidential partners. In addition, there were a growing number of non-traditional presidential partners that were ethnically diverse, male, GLBT, career professionals, accomplished research professors and administrators, and in interracial partnerships. Overall, the community and university alumni's socially elite accepted the presidential partner regardless of ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. One significant finding in this study was the pressure for all presidential partners to socialize with the socially elite because of the potential for university fundraising.

Two ethnic minorities in the study, an African American and a Latina, had issues with non-acceptance within their own communities, which they perceived stemmed from a difference in social class status. One response to this lack of acceptance was to re-establish an African American upper-middle class boy and girls club. The other presidential partner was unable to identify a solution to her situation.

*Research Question 5*

How does positionality relate to the university presidential partner's role expectations?

There were 13 presidential partners who were active in university work. They identified positive and negative advantages of being a presidential partner and being linked to the university president. The presidential partner identified advantages such as having a certain level of power and access to university and community resources to accomplish projects on behalf of the university; opportunities to meet famous people; and, bringing attention, credibility and prestige to the organizations and projects. The disadvantages were receiving requests or favors from the community and university members; misinterpretation from others who perceived that the presidential partner's actions and comments were the same as the university president; and, the loss of employment as political retaliation against the university president. The final disadvantage was receiving punitive actions from the presidential partner's employer because of linkages to their partner.

*Research Question 6*

How have universities changed their support for presidential partners?

University support has changed in the last 20 years, but not significantly. There were increases in the number of ethnic minorities, male, same sex, interracial partnerships, and dual career presidential partnerships. In addition, there was a decrease in university owned presidential houses, less involvement by the presidential partner

with the presidential search interviewing committee; and, fewer opportunities for the presidential partner to learn of the university's role expectations.

Within the context of these changes the university increased its household support for the presidential couple when the presidential partner was male or when the presidential couple were both employed. Housekeeper(s) were hired on a full-time basis and other personnel were placed in responsible roles to make decisions for hosting university events at the presidential residences, handle the presidential partner's calendar and correspondence, and other detailed activities.

I heard of presidential partners who received compensation for their university work. None of the respondents in this study were receiving any compensation although five respondents voiced interest.

A significant number of universities failed to embrace the presidential partner as part of the university system and therefore many university resources were not available to the partner such as a university car, retirement benefits, library privileges, access to technology and support, access to the recreation center, and other resources. The explanation provided was that the presidential partner was not an official employee of the university and therefore ineligible for such benefits.

### *Implications for Further Research*

The findings in this study demonstrated a vast amount of uncharted, non-researched territory. Whereas traditional roles associated with females had changed in

society and the workforce since the 1970s, the patriarchal structure of the university's role expectations of female presidential partners had not.

The research gap in university presidential partners was extensive and provided ample opportunities to explore this particular privileged population within various frameworks, theories, and contexts. Research findings from university presidential partners would contribute to research fields such as gender and women's studies, as well as areas associated with masculinity and gender conflict, sexual orientation, intersectionality, power and positionality, social class, higher education administrative leadership, university policy, GLBT issues, dual careers, and marriage and family.

### *Limitations of the Study*

There were several limitations in the study that I had anticipated before the study and developed during the study. I will discuss these in the following paragraphs.

#### *Limitation 1*

##### *Positionality of the Researcher*

The first limitation was associated with the positionality of the researcher. I was not privileged to access data from the national president's associations. These data were closed to public scrutiny and gathering data on university presidential partners was impossible. If I had not had a long-term personal friendship with a university presidential partner I would not have been successful in accessing some of this information as well as completing the study.

*Limitation 2*

## The Researcher as an Ethnic Minority Female

The second limitation was my ethnicity as a Latina. Although I did not experience any personal exclusion from the presidential partners based on my ethnicity, I did sense reluctance from some White female presidential partners to openly discuss issues based on class and ethnicity.

*Limitation 3*

## Identifying Same-Sex Presidential Partnerships

The third limitation was identifying same-sex presidential partners. Publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The Advocate* were my primary sources. Nothing was found in research publications and research databases. I learned in the last three weeks after writing the dissertation that there were eleven openly gay presidents, not three, as reported earlier (Fain, 2007a; Fain, 2007b). Therefore AASCU was correct in their assessment there were fifteen gay presidents. The first Fain (2007a) article was my only source, turned out to be inaccurate, and out of date.

*Limitation 4*

## Gatekeepers

The fourth limitation was the gatekeepers. Gatekeepers were the people who guarded access to the presidential partner. The gatekeepers varied from the president's assistant, presidential partner's assistant, receptionists and personal acquaintances of the presidential partner. Why gatekeepers prevented any access to the university presidential

partners never became clear to me. Working with gatekeepers caused time delays and eventually no access to the presidential partner.

However, after I had contacted the presidential partner through other methods (e-mail, president, acquaintances), I invariably did meet a few gatekeepers. The gatekeepers I met in person were helpful, friendly and accommodating.

#### *Limitation 5*

##### Lack of Information on University Presidential Partners

The fifth limitation was the lack of information on all university presidential partners, especially those who were ethnic minority, male or GLBT. There was a lack of a central clearinghouse on university presidents and their partners. The information available was limited to select national presidents' organizations and accessing the records proved troublesome. Even the American Council on Education (ACE) lacked information on university presidential partners.

#### *Recommendations*

The recommendations for further research on university presidential partners were numerous. As stated earlier in the study, the current research literature was outdated and lacking in several critical areas. The information about university presidential partners was difficult to locate, inaccurate, biased against females and promoted stereotypical behaviors associated with females and males.

However, the need for updated information was requested by the presidential partners in addition to the need to produce new scholarly research. Therefore, the following recommendations are divided into two categories: *Recommendations for Practice* and *Recommendations for Research*.

*Recommendations for Practice (RP)*

The recommendations for practice (RP) were research findings that could benefit current and future university presidential partners and benefit further research.

*RP1. National Information Clearinghouse.* From a pragmatic perspective one research recommendation was to develop an updated national information clearinghouse that identified and organized resources. The clearinghouse would be available for university presidential partners, potential presidential partners, Regents, faculty, students, and community members. These resources and materials ideally could be accessible on the Internet. Such a clearinghouse would need to be updated on a systematic basis and therefore one of the national higher education associations (e. g. American Council of Education) and could spearhead a collaborative project with the other national presidential associations (e. g. NASULGC, AASCU, AAU).

*RP2. Identifying Information and Referral Resources for University Presidential Partners.* One recommendation was to compile a list of information and referral resources for future presidential partners of the role choices they have as the university presidential partner. The resources could be accessible on the Internet as well as other public venues. Presidential partners would not have to wait one to two years before they attended a national president's support meeting before learning of a support group and

finding a mentor. Such a project could be funded by one or more of the national president's associations and made available on the associations' websites. Research findings could result in publication in research journals and in educational trade publications.

*RP3. Assessing a Future Presidential Partnership.* One recommendation was to identify and develop suggestions for knowledge and skills preferable for upwardly mobile partners who wanted to become university presidential partners. The suggestions would aid the couple in assessing the strengths and weakness of the partner who would be the presidential partner and determine whether the presidential partner would be comfortable in that role. The guidelines would serve as a starting point for interactive communication between the potential presidential couple before the presidential search would begin. Research findings would result in publications in research journals, in trade publications such as *The Advocate*, *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Atlantic Monthly* and in educational trade publications.

*RP4. Negotiating the Presidential Partner's Role Expectations.* The fourth recommendation was to gather data and information and develop guidelines for negotiating the role expectations of the university presidential partner before the presidential candidate meets with the presidential selection interviewing committee. The resource would include successful suggestions, terminology, examples and general legal issues. Such a project could be funded by one or more of the national university president's associations; made available on the associations' or legal office websites; and, reproduced in hardcopy for distribution. Research findings would result in articles

in research journals, educational employment resource guides, and in educational trade publications.

*RP5. Negotiating the Dual Career Presidential Partners.* The fifth recommendation was to create a guide for the dual career presidential partners that provided negotiating options for the partner. The guide would benefit presidential partners who may suffer a loss of employment because of the location of the university (rural or lack of available positions), the university's nepotism policy, or a conflict of interest. The presidential partners who decided to commute could negotiate the expenses of two households and what specific university role expectations were essential. The research would include legal advice from legal counsel and labor mediators.

*RP6. Training Manual.* The sixth recommendation was to create an updated, organized, and sanctioned training manual for university presidential partners. The manual would be written from the perspective of the potential reader and to include inclusive language: female, male, GLBT, ethnic minority, diverse in religion and culture, etc. This project could be funded by one or more of the national president's associations; made available on the associations' websites; maintained to keep it current; and, reproduced in hardcopy for distribution. Research findings could result in publication in research journals.

*RP7. Presidential Partner University Work Accountability Software.* The seventh recommendation was to develop a workbook designed as a software program that recorded and organized the presidential partner's university work. Presidential partners and/or their assistants could record the activities performed by the presidential partner.

The data would be analyzed for cost analysis, budget development, marketing, proposals, and other uses. The workbook could provide information and data for current and future presidential partners; used for marketing, informing the Regents of the contributions by the presidential partner on behalf of the university; and, used for contract negotiation.

*RP8. Promoting the Maintenance of the University Presidential House.* The eighth recommendation would create justification for maintaining the presidential house based on data. A recent database search illustrated that some universities were selling the President's House (Ritter, 2003) or renovating the presidential house as a revenue generating property (University of Florida, 2007). Fewer presidential houses were being constructed and those being newly designed were larger to accommodate university staff and to increase the usage of the house for college related events (University of Alaska, 2007). In addition, financing new presidential houses or renovating existing presidential houses were identified as reasons why presidents were fired (Kercheval, 2004). From a pragmatic perspective, research findings could benefit the university's public relations approach in maintaining the presidential house for its historic value instead of allegations of a misuse of funds.

#### *Recommendations for Research (RR)*

The recommendations for researching university presidential partners were numerous. As stated earlier, the current research literature was outdated and lacking in a lot of critical areas. The information about university presidential partners was difficult

to locate, inaccurate, biased against females and promoted stereotypical behaviors associated with females and males.

The following recommendations were developed during the research study. A significant number of the recommendations identified gaps in the research literature about university presidential partners who differed in gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Other recommendations originated from the interviews I conducted with the presidential partners.

*RR 1. GLBT Presidential Partners' Research.* After the research study was completed, coded, and analyzed, an article appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* identifying 11 GLBT university presidents (Fain, 2007b). Research is needed on GLBT presidential partners and their identity development and how their identity intersects with the role of being the presidential partner. Research could be conducted from a variety of frameworks including comparison and contrast on experiences of GLBT presidential partners. In addition, research is needed on the support and the lack of support for GLBT presidential partnerships.

*RR 2. Ethnic Minority Presidential Partners.* In addition to heterosexual and same-sex partnerships, the study lacked a significant number of ethnic minority presidential partners, specifically Latino, African American, Native American and Asian females and males. Although the majority of ethnic minority presidents were found in community college leaderships, there were fewer ethnic minority *university* presidential partnerships. Further research could identify a pool of ethnic minority *university*

presidential partners and conduct a comparison of their experiences to assess if there were a consensus in experiences.

*RR 3. Dual Career Presidential Partnerships.* In the study, when a partner became a university president, some of the presidential partners tried to maintain their career rather than retire or become unemployed. Several of the presidential partners commented on being physically overwhelmed. Further research could examine how presidential partners balanced dual careers, performed the role expectations of being the presidential partner, and if appropriate, negotiated the loss of employment.

*RR 4. Loss of Employment and Presidential Partners.* There were a variety of reasons why the presidential partners chose not to work, worked part-time, or were unable to find employment. Some of the presidential partners expressed frustration when they were unable to find employment in the same community or having their employment jeopardized when politically linked to their partner's university. Further research could be conducted on how presidential partners could prepare financially and psychologically for the potential loss of employment due to the politics and/or the positionality of the presidential partners.

*RR 5. Retired Partners vs. Career Partner Differences.* Research could be conducted on the professional career partner who willingly retired to become a presidential partner, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. The research frame could be on how they defined their role as the presidential partner, and their adjustment to retirement and their new role.

*RR 6. The Presidential Partner Who Wanted be President.* In this study, there were four ethnic minority female presidential partners who voiced their initial personal career goal of becoming a college president and for various reasons were unable to pursue that dream. Various frames (e.g. sexism, phenotype, glass ceiling, sexual harassment, patriarchy, racism) could be used to research the circumstances of why these presidential partners were unable to succeed in becoming university presidents. Further research could be conducted to explore a comparison study among presidential partners according to gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

*RR 7. University Owned Presidential Houses.* Within the context of the role expectations of the presidential partner, a great deal of discussion revolved around the existence of the university owned presidential house. With a university owned presidential house, there were additional expectations from the presidential partner, regardless of gender and ethnicity to assist with entertaining. It was unknown whether there were any expectations associated with a presidential house from an openly gay presidential partner. However, in previous studies, presidential partners expressed concern about the lack of privacy and limited access to the main public use areas of the house by non-family members (Ostar, 1983; Ostar 1986). In this study, one presidential partner expressed a desire to live in the presidential house because it was convenient access to the campus and students. *“A presidential house would be great. I have had both private and public homes and I prefer to live in a presidential house because of the connection to campus activities.”* [747]

Further research could be conducted with presidential partners to determine whether their opinions had changed on the advantages and disadvantages of living in a university owned presidential house. The research findings would update the information on the roles expectations of the presidential partner based on gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. The research findings would provide information needed for the presidential partners to negotiate the role expectations of the presidential partner and requests for personnel and a household budget.

*RR 8. The University Presidential House as a Historic Home.* From a historical, conservation and preservation perspective, the information on university presidential houses was severely lacking. Information on university presidential houses was scarce and primarily limited to university websites (Cooper, 2003; Lawrence, 2003; University of Alaska, 2007). The few articles that were identified on the presidential houses were in not in peer-reviewed research journals. Therefore, further research on the historical and architectural value of university presidential houses could benefit research fields in architecture, American history, and higher education.

*RR 9. National President's Associations.* In the study, the national presidents' associations perpetuated the university's traditional role expectations with little consideration for the GLBT, male, dual career, and/or ethnic minority presidential partner. Further research could be conducted on what resources and services these presidential partners expected from the national president's associations, support groups, and universities.

*RR 10. Additional Materials for Resource Development.* Previously in *Additional Research Findings 5. Compensating the work of the presidential partner*, I briefly discussed the importance and expense of the presidential partner maintaining an appearance that was socially acceptable by the socially elite circles. The wardrobe for special gala events was tied to the female presidential partners' request for compensation to cover the costs for the "public performance" of the First Lady. These public performances were tied to the university's expectations that by aligning the presidential partners with the socially elite, it would foster future financial support and contributions. Therefore, one frame could be in tying the wardrobe as part of the materials needed for resource development. Various other research frames (e.g. presentation of self, power and positionality, social class, White privilege, social capital) could be used to explore the public's expectations of the physical appearance and attire of the presidential partner based on gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

*RR 11. Support Systems for the Presidential Partner.* Twenty-three of the twenty-four Presidential partners interviewed were not originally from the region where the university was located. Further research could be conducted on the support systems that were not in place to assist the presidential partner in conducting their university work, career obligations, and maintaining their family. Research findings could provide suggestions for developing support systems for the presidential partners in the region, state, and the university system.

*RR 12. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Support Systems.* One of the presidential partners I was unable to interview within my time frame was the

partner of a lesbian chancellor who had committed suicide (Kennedy, 2006). There were questions in retrospect of whether such a tragedy could have been averted and what support the presidential/chancellor partner had before, during and after the tragedy. Further research could be conducted on the experiences and challenges of GLBT presidential partners as they relate to employment discrimination, sexism, hate crimes, institutional support for the GLBT presidential partner and the partnership and other topics.

*RR 13. Children at Home.* In the study, two female and two male presidential partners expressed concern about the family dynamics when the children were still at home. Further research could be conducted on the experiences of the presidential family and the effects of their experiences, (i.e. commuting marriage, changing presidencies every three to six years) on the children's development. Further research could be conducted comparing the family dynamics of university presidential families to other career families such as the ministry, military, U.S. Presidents, corporate executives and others.

In addition, further research could be conducted from the child's perspective and any long-term consequences of growing up in such a public lifestyle. Comparisons could be made with other children from public servant families such as ministers, politicians, principals, professional athletes, and entertainers.

*RR 14. Living in the Public Eye.* A few of the presidential partners resented the constant public scrutiny or as others described it as "living in a fishbowl." Further research could be conducted to learn of experiences by presidential partners living in the

“fishbowl,” how the public scrutiny affected the family structure, and how the families were able to adjust. Such research would benefit future university presidential partners and would benefit research in sociology, marriage and family, higher education, and counseling.

*RR 15. University Presidential Partner Post-retirement.* I learned during the study that there were six retired university presidents and their partners living in the same community. The former university presidents were employed but I wondered what were the presidential partners doing? One presidential partner commented that she missed being a presidential partner. “*I wouldn’t mind being one again.*” [250] Further research could focus on how the presidential partner experienced adjustments in status, power, and positionality. Additional research could compare experiences of former university presidential partners with other former partners of leaders such as U.S. Presidents, ambassadors, corporate executives, military, and others.

*RR 16. Presidential Partners of Color.* The research on ethnic minority presidential partners was lacking. Further research could include an exploratory study of the presidential partners at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Native American tribal colleges, and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).

*RR 17. Compensating the Presidential Partner.* In this study, there were five presidential partners who expressed interest in being compensated for their university work. Two articles advocated paying the presidential partner (Huang, 1999; Cotton, 2003) and one article re-affirmed the traditional patriarchal role expectations of the female presidential partner (Trebon & Trebon, 2004). Further research could be

conducted on the “2 for the price of 1” career and duo-career partnerships and how universities are compensating the presidential partner when the presidential partner is required to perform the university’s role expectations.

*RR 18. Deconstructing the Presidential Partner’s University Role Performance.*

Further research could be conducted using the discussion of the performance of roles by Goffman (1966) as the framework and deconstruct the performance, setting, and props of the presidential partners’ performance at various college related events. The research could include factors such as the presidential partner’s gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. In addition, research studies could explore the difference in the role expectations based on the type of university (e.g. public, private, HBCUs, HSIs, for-profit) including the presidential partner’s gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

Further research could explore unfortunate events such as divorce and death and the presidential partner’s experiences with the university’s role expectations as the divorced partner or widowed partner, respectively.

*RR 19. Interracial Partnerships.* This study had four interracial partnerships and the *AASCU Partner Directory* had additional listings. Two ethnic minority male university presidents were married to White women and two White male university presidents were married to ethnic minority women. All of the ethnic minorities in the interracial marriages had very fair complexions and could “pass” for White. Further research studies could be conducted with interracial presidential partnerships and explore the presidential partners’ experiences with the university and community based on their gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

*RR 20. The Non-performing Presidential Partner.* There was two female and six male presidential partners in the study who were adamant that they did not conduct any of the traditional role expectations. However, they performed the primary role expectations that were discussed in the findings. Further research could be conducted to identify presidential partners who refused to perform the university's primary role expectations and explore the reactions from the university campus and community.

*RR 21. The Compromised Career Tracks of the Presidential Partner.* There were several presidential partners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, who stated that their careers had been affected by their partner's presidential career. What were the circumstances surrounding the presidential partners who compromised their careers for their partner? Further research could be conducted on the presidential partners who compromised their careers and how those experiences affected the presidential partners' career goals, their relationship with their partner and other factors. Factors included in the study could be gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital history, and family history.

*RR 22. Demographics of University Presidential Partners.* Demographics and data on presidential partners were lacking. Further research needed to be conducted to access the basic demographics. The data could include the presidential partner's age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, educational background, number of universities as presidential partner, family history, career history, etc. and their contributions to the university, community, or country. Data on this population does not exist and could benefit additional research.

*RR 23. Divorce, Death and the University Presidential Partner.* This study revealed concern of what would happen to the presidential partner and family in the case of death or divorce. Further research studies could be conducted on what alternatives presidential partners had in cases of death or divorce; and, how the university and community treated the presidential partner.

*RR 24. Comparison of the University Presidential Partnership to the Profile of the University Board of Regents.* Further research could explore the diversity of the Board of Regents who hired diverse presidential partnerships. Diversity could be based on gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation or defined differently. Research findings could demonstrate whether a correlation existed between the diversity of the Board of Regents and the diversity of the university presidential partners.

*RR 25. Negotiating Tenure for the Presidential Partner.* Some presidents were able to negotiate tenured positions for their partners. An exploratory study could be conducted to determine the extent of success in negotiation. It would be beneficial for further research to identify the challenges, successes and determine whether the results were based on gender, ethnicity, institutional culture, and/or sexual orientation.

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**APPENDIX A**

**PRESIDENTIAL PARTNER/ASSOCIATE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **PRESIDENTIAL PARTNER/ASSOCIATE OF THE PRESIDENT**

#### **SUMMARY FUNCTIONS**

Provide institutional and presidential social support, University outreach and public relations activities, volunteer contributions to campus and the community, and involvement with student, faculty and staff in support of the University mission. Basic functions and scope of responsibilities include (1) organizing, hosting and participating in social functions supporting the University and official University events, both on and off campus; (2) campus involvement with, and support of, faculty, staff and students; (3) overseeing the official University residence; (4) representing the University to external constituencies; (5) community involvement and leadership; and (6) professional development activities relevant to the formal spousal role.

#### **TYPICAL ACTIONS**

Coordinating, planning, organizing, scheduling, supervising, participating, entertaining, corresponding, and traveling.

#### **TYPICAL DUTIES**

Social functions and official University events

- Plan and orchestrate social events
- Engage in official entertaining for students, faculty, staff and external support constituencies
- Organize and/or attend receptions; fundraising events; staff, faculty and student recognition events; donor recognition and cultivation events; alumni events
- Develop systems and train/mentor personnel to assist with events
- Create invitations, develop and maintain guest lists, and keep records
- Develop menus and instruct food service/catering personnel

Campus Involvement

- Organize and/or attend student recruitment activities, student and parental orientation, student and faculty performances and exhibits, commencement and colloquia speaker presentations, athletic events
- Serve as liaison to the President's staff and event or community relations staff for purposes of calendaring and scheduling presidential and spousal activities and time
- Conduct campus tours
- Meet with student, faculty and staff organizations and clubs

Official Residence

- Oversee the official University residence, either on or off campus; University or privately owned

- Arrange and coordinate events at University residence
- Arrange for security. Set-up, clean-up and decorating for University functions at official residence

#### Representing the University

- Formally represent the University at local, state and national events and meetings
- Serve as campus correspondent and acknowledger of support provided by others, including gifts, congratulations, or condolences
- Travel (with the President or alone, where appropriate) for recruitment of students. Meetings with alumni, meetings of higher education associations, attendance at conference on matters affecting the University, meetings with prospective and current donors, and representation in the University's international programs and projects
- Speak to national and state groups to represent the University
- Engage in general public relations activities on behalf of the institution

#### Community Leadership

- Serve as community leader for organizations and projects of general and educational benefit and for those relevant to University mission
- Engage in community volunteer work in areas such as civic, educational, artistic, and social service activities
- Participate in fund drives for local institutions and organizations, such as support for hospitals and schools
- Serve as community tour and orientation guide

#### Professional Development

- Participate in seminar and workshops of interest to the University and relevant to the role of presidential partner
- Engage in activities, which further develop skills and abilities related to job functions (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, n.d.)

**APPENDIX B**

**LETTER SENT TO PRESIDENTIAL PARTNER**

**Folder:** Turner-Williams, Susan  
**Attachments:** Part 1 [noname](#) (TEXT/PLAIN 7bit 1854 bytes) [Hide](#)  
Part 2 [INFORMATION SHEET.doc](#) (APPLICATION/Microsoft Word base64 37842 bytes)  
**Date:** Friday, Spring 2007 09:40 am  
**From:** Vargas, Juanita Gamez <[jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu)>   
**To:** Susan Turner-Williams  
**CC:** [jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu)  
**Reply-To:** [jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu)  
**Subject:** Request for participation in dissertation study

Dear Dr. Turner-Williams,

I am a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M University in College Station and my dissertation topic is on the experiences of university presidential spouses. My focus is on non-traditional spouses and their experiences. The purpose of this study is to learn of the leadership experiences of diverse university presidential spouses, your perceptions of your success and challenges, and how you handled those challenges. You would be a wonderful participant due to your multiple roles as a parent, career professional and a presidential spouse. I would be most honored if you would allow me to interview you for my research study.

I have attached specific information on the case study. I invite you to peruse the information and note that the identity of all participants will be kept confidential. This study is anonymous. The interview will consist of a face-to-face interview and approximately twelve open-ended questions about your experiences and perceptions. Your answers will not be taped. Your answers will be written down on an answer sheet, typed up, and sent to you for corrections and feedback.

The interview will take approximately 90 minutes. The benefits of your participation will contribute to increasing published recognition of presidential spouses and providing useful information for other university presidential spouses. In addition, the study will contribute to the research fields on presidential partners in higher education leadership and policy, gender issues, women's issues, and sociology. I hope you will seriously consider my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Juanita Gamez Vargas

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Juanita Gamez Vargas  
Principal Investigator  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, Texas  
(979) 822-3149  
[jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu)

**APPENDIX C**

**INFORMATION CONSENT FORM**

## CONSENT FORM

### The Experiences of University Presidential Partners at Selected Institutions of Higher Education

You have been asked to participate in a research study of the experiences of university presidential spouses. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your diversity and leadership role as a university presidential partner. A total of fifteen people have been asked to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to learn of the leadership experiences of diverse university presidential spouses, your perceptions of your success and challenges, and how you handled those challenges. Some of the challenges you may want to think about are college traditions, current administrative powers, gender, race, and interacting with wealthy alumni.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to meet with the researcher for a face-to-face interview. The interview will consist of no more than twenty open-ended questions about your experiences and perceptions. Your answers will not be taped. Your answers will be written down on the answer sheet, typed up, and sent to you for corrections and feedback. The study will take approximately ninety minutes for the interview. If an additional interview is needed, then the researcher will contact you to determine whether you would prefer the follow-up interview be conducted in person or by telephone. The risks associated with the interview are minimal because of the possible discomfort due to the nature and length of questions. However, the researcher will keep the questions short and avoid emotionally charged issues. The benefits of your participation will contribute to increasing the recognition of presidential spouses and the research fields on presidential partners in higher education leadership, women's studies, gender issues, and sociology.

You will receive no monetary compensation. This study is anonymous. You will be assigned an alias before your interview. All records will refer to your alias and your true name will never be revealed or recorded. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Juanita Gamez Vargas will have access to the records. Your decision whether or not to participate will **not** affect your current or future relations with Texas A&M University. If you decide to participate, you are free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make you uncomfortable. You can withdraw at any time without your relations with the University, job, benefits, etc. being affected. You can contact Juanita Gamez Vargas at 979.822.3149 or at [jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu) and Dr. Christine A. Stanley at 979.845.5311 or at [Christine-A-Stanley@tamu.edu](mailto:Christine-A-Stanley@tamu.edu) with any questions about this study.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board—Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, can contact the Institutional Review Board through Ms. Melissa McIlhaney, IRB Program Coordinator, Office of Research Compliance, (979) 458-4067. [mcilhaney@tamu.edu](mailto:mcilhaney@tamu.edu).

Please be sure you have read the above statement, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D**

**LETTER SENT TO THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT**

Jewell, Dr. Richard

**Attachments:** Part 1 [no name](#) (TEXT/PLAIN 7bit 757 bytes) [Hide](#)  
 Part 2 [INFORMATION SHEET.doc](#)  
 (APPLICATION/MWORD base64 37836 bytes)  
 Part 3 Letter to Darcy Jewell  
 (APPLICATION/MWORD base64 35042 bytes)

**Date:** Friday, Spring 2007 10:43 am  
**From:** Vargas, Juanita Gamez  
 <[jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu)>  
  
**To:** Dr. Jewell  
**CC:** [jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu)  
**Reply-To:** [jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgamezvargas@neo.tamu.edu)  
**Subject:** Request to reach Mrs. Jewell for dissertation study

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Dr. Jewell,  
 I am a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M University in College Station and have a request of Mrs. Jewell.

I was unable to locate an e-mail address for Mrs. Jewell and request that you forward to her the attached letter asking her to consider being a participant in my dissertation case study on the experiences of university presidential spouses. I have also attached an information sheet about the study for her perusal.

I would consider her participation a vital contribution to the case study. I appreciate your kind assistance to my request.

Sincerely,

Juanita Gamez Vargas

**APPENDIX E**

**LETTER SENT TO THE GATEKEEPER**

: Newell-Cabot, Jane  
**Attachments:** Part 1 [no name](#) (TEXT/PLAIN quoted-printable 1210 bytes) [Hide](#)  
Part 2 [no name](#) (TEXT/HTML quoted-printable 9528 bytes) [View](#)  
**Date:** Monday, Spring 2007 08:40 am  
**From:** Administrative Assistant   
**To:** Juanita Vargas <[jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu)>  
**Reply-To:** Administrative Assistant  
**Subject:** RE: Inquiry

Dr. Cabot is married and his wife is Dr. Jane Newell. You are welcome to e-mail me the information and I'll see that she receives it.

Administrative Assistant

---

From: Juanita Vargas [mailto:[jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu)]  
Sent: Sunday, Spring 2007 11:06 AM  
To: Administrative Assistant  
Cc: Juanita Vargas  
Subject: Inquiry

Administrative Assistant,

I am a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M in College Station in the College of Education and Human Development. I am conducting research on the spouses of university presidents and when I searched the website for Dr. Cabot, I could not find a biography. Is Dr. Cabot married and is there an address I can send his wife letters requesting her participation and information sheet outlining the purpose of the research?

I would appreciate a response to my request.

Sincerely,

Juanita Gamez Vargas

Research Investigator  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, Texas  
(979) 822-3149  
[jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu](mailto:jgvargas@neo.tamu.edu)

**APPENDIX F**

**PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### Interview Questions

1. First, please tell me about your background and your journey to becoming a university presidential partner.
2. The literature states that several presidential partners perform the traditional roles such as tours of the presidential home, entertaining, serving on committees, and fundraising. One of the reasons I wanted to interview you was your interest in taking on some projects and activities that may not be considered traditional. Please describe why you decided to take a non-traditional leadership role.
3. Could you describe some of your projects that you are currently undertaking or previous projects?
4. You have been a presidential partner in previous universities. Please describe your experiences as a presidential spouse at those institutions.
5. Please describe projects that were near and dear to your heart and for some reason decided to abandon. Please discuss why you made that decision.
6. I am sure that you meet a lot of multimillionaires, people who have more money than you and I could ever imagine possessing. Please describe your experiences in working with a very class-conscious group of people especially around issues of money.
7. Please describe how you think your status as a presidential spouse has helped you accomplish your projects.  
Describe college resources & alumni or available support from administration, faculty & your spouse.
8. There are a few presidential associations that offer support group meetings for the presidential partners during the national conference. How have you found these meetings receptive in supporting you and other partners in developing non-traditional leadership roles?
9. If you could create your own job description as a presidential partner, what would it include? What would you drop?
10. That concludes the questions I had regarding your leadership initiatives. Is there anything you would like to add or some observations you would like to make that would help other presidential partners considering non-traditional leadership roles?

**APPENDIX G**

**FINAL VERSION OF  
PRESIDENTIAL PARTNER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

## Questions for Presidential Spouse Interview

**Non-traditional role:** Either maintaining a professional career or spearheading projects that meet a need.

1. In the literature that I have been reading, a significant number of university presidents have been in academia for quite some time. (Background information)
  - b. Did you ever think you would find yourself as a presidential spouse and what in your background do you think has prepared you for this role?
  
2. I realize from what I have read that being a presidential spouse can keep you quite busy. I started reviewing the literature on presidential spouses and their roles and responsibilities. There was the traditional role of entertaining faculty, students, alumni and Board of Trustees; maintaining the Presidential home; representing the university at various functions; and, also serving on a variety of committees. So this leads me to the next question.
  - a. During the interviewing process for the president's position, did the Regents at any time speak with your spouse or with you about your role as the presidential spouse?
  
  - b. Were you ever asked to sign a contract as a volunteer or are you mentioned in your partner's contract?
  
3. I also read that many presidential spouses have decided to do something different with their lives than the traditional role. These differences vary based on the personal goals of the presidential spouse, the university's expectations, the community, and other factors.
  - a. As the presidential spouse, what roles had you chosen for yourself? (Why were you working outside the home?)
  
  - b. If your goal was to maintain your professional career, describe your experiences in doing so and how the institution had supported you in your career.
  
  - c. If the institution still requires you to maintain some of the traditional roles, what kind of support do you receive in handling those roles? (Entertaining, correspondence, hosting)
  
4. Some presidential spouses have taken on a leadership role and have adopted projects that are dear to their hearts. Please describe some projects.

5. The literature describes successful projects completed by presidential spouses. How do you think your status as a presidential spouse has helped you accomplish your projects?
6. I have read that very few presidential spouses have ever been formally recognized for their efforts by the academic institution. What has been your experience?
7. There are times when the presidential couple is not only new to the community but also the first ethnic minority president, interracial couple, or the first female president. In your role as the presidential partner, how has this difference in race/gender affected your leadership initiatives? (Were there any stereotypes or assumptions about your race or culture you had to address?)
8. I had also read that one of the frustrating things spouses have experienced is learning the role expectations of the presidential spouse because there really wasn't a current handbook. Some felt like they went into it cold and had to learn by trial and error.
  - a. Could you please describe to me what your first years were like as a presidential spouse?
  - b. What presidential spouse titles have you had?
9. Were you ever been asked to do something as the presidential spouse that made you uncomfortable? If so, how did you handle it?
10. I once read in an article that other presidential spouses wished their spouses could spend more time with them and their family.
  - a. How did you address the issue of time together and privacy?
11. Could you describe to me what has been some rewarding events or circumstances you have experienced as the presidential spouse?
12. I am sure that you meet a lot of multimillionaires, people who have more money than you and I could ever imagine possessing. Please describe your experiences in working with a very class-conscious group of people.
13. Could you describe to me what have been some challenges you have experienced as a presidential spouse?
14. There are a few presidential associations that offer support group meetings for the presidential partners during the national conference (AASCU, CIC, etc). How have you found these meetings receptive in supporting you and other partners in developing non-traditional leadership roles?

15. Someday you and your spouse will move on and in the next place you might be a presidential spouse again. What do you think you would do differently?
16. If you could create your own job description as a presidential partner, what would it include? What would you drop?
17. I read an article on benefits that some presidential spouses receive benefits (travel, insurance, membership fees, college car, retirement plans, etc.) and some do not.
  - a. Given your role and responsibilities as the presidential spouse, what benefits would you want universities to provide for you?
18. That concludes the questions I had regarding your leadership initiatives. Is there anything you would like to add or some observations you would like to make that would help other presidential partners considering non-traditional leadership roles?

**APPENDIX H**

**PRELIMINARY LIST OF THEMES**

### **Preliminary List of Themes**

Appearance Dress  
Association Support Groups  
Class Issues  
Culture  
Dual Careers  
Family  
Fishbowl Life  
Friendships in Community  
Gender Issues  
Off-Campus Living  
Organizational Influence  
Power/Leadership  
Presidential Partner Identity Linked to President:  
Presidential Partner Positive Experiences  
Presidential Partner Traditional Roles  
Preparation for Presidential Partner Role  
Presidential House  
Race  
Religion  
Self-Identity Issues  
Training Manual Needed  
University Compensation & Support  
Would Never Want to Repeat Role as Presidential Partner

**APPENDIX I**

**FINAL LIST OF THEMES**

## Final List of Themes

<p>Association Support Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helpful</li> <li>Not Helpful/No interest</li> </ul> <p>Presidential Partner Role Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never Again</li> </ul> <p>Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upper Class Acceptance</li> <li>No Acceptance</li> <li>Alumni tie to University</li> <li>Self Identity with Class</li> <li>Observations about the Elite</li> </ul> <p>Compensation by university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 for 1</li> <li>Wants Compensation</li> <li>Does not Want Compensation</li> </ul> <p>Knew Partner Wanted to be a University President</p> <p>Did not know Partner wanted to be a University President; Not Prepared</p> <p>Presidential Partner had Wanted to be the University President</p> <p>Appearance—Dress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking the part; Appearance Maintenance</li> <li>Not Worried about Appearance</li> </ul> <p>Dual Careers: Doing it all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compromise by Presidential Partner</li> <li>Commuting Relationships</li> <li>University Supports Dual Career</li> <li>Time Management</li> <li>Works at President's University</li> <li>Not Allowed to Work at President's</li> </ul> <p>University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining a Dual Career</li> <li>Other Employer Does/Does Not Support</li> <li>Presidential Partner role</li> </ul> <p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellness</li> <li>Children at Home</li> <li>Family First or Not</li> <li>Technology</li> <li>Emotional and Physical Support</li> </ul> <p>Personal Life &amp; Privacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Criticism</li> <li>Fishbowl Term</li> <li>Public Image, with Whom, Where:</li> <li>Public Eye</li> <li>Children Affected</li> <li>Making Time for Each Other</li> </ul> <p>Friendships in Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caution</li> <li>Long-distance Friends</li> </ul>	<p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Male Role Conflict</li> <li>Flirtation by Women</li> <li>Female Role Expectation</li> </ul> <p>Self-Identity Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong Positive Identity</li> <li>Presidential Partner titles</li> <li>Problems Adjusting as Presidential</li> </ul> <p>Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insecure about Next Step in Career</li> </ul> <p>Identity Linked to President</p> <p>Training Manual</p> <p>Off-Campus Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Privacy and Relaxation</li> <li>Selected and Used for University Business</li> </ul> <p>Presidents Praising Partner Publicly</p> <p>Presidential Partner Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising</li> <li>Entertaining</li> <li>Challenges</li> <li>24/7 Demands</li> <li>Opinion on Presidential Partner Roles</li> <li>Students</li> </ul> <p>Organizational Influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contracts on Liability and Volunteer</li> <li>Direct and Indirect Pressure</li> <li>Societal Pressures</li> <li>Negotiating or Not with Board</li> <li>No Expectations from Organization</li> <li>No Recognition from University</li> </ul> <p>Power/Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Networking</li> <li>Knowledge of Communication &amp; Power Skills</li> <li>Active Leadership</li> <li>Not Active</li> <li>Does not think Presidential Partner Position has Power</li> </ul> <p>Presidential House</p> <p>Race</p> <p>Culture</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>University Support for PP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Support</li> <li>Personnel/Staff Support</li> <li>Little or No Support</li> </ul>
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**VITA**

Name: Juanita Gamez Vargas

Address: Texas A&M University  
Department of Educational Administration & Human  
Resource Development  
510 Harrington Tower, 4226 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77841-4226

E-mail Address: jgvargas@tamu.edu

Education: B. A. Library Science, Baylor University, Waco, TX, 1979  
  
M. Library and Information Science, The Catholic  
University of America, Washington, D.C., 1981  
  
Ph.D. Educational Administration, Texas A&M  
University, College Station, TX, 2008

Awards: Mexican American and U.S. Latino Research Center  
(MALRC) Fellow  
American Association for Higher Education, Hispanic  
Caucus Fellow, 2005  
Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society  
Fulbright Commission. Germany, 2000