

**Governing Higher
Education: A Comparative
Analysis Public Higher
Education in Rhode Island**

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RIPEC Mission Statement

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Through in-depth research, program monitoring, advocacy, and public information activities, RIPEC:

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- Enhances understanding between the private sector and state and local governments;
- Provides objective information and conducts educational programs for the benefit of Council members, public officials, and the general public;
- Builds coalitions with other community groups to promote sound public policies; and
- Promotes a public policy agenda to foster a climate for economic opportunity.

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Abbreviations

BOE – Board of Education

CCRI – Community College of Rhode Island

CUNY – City University of New York

ECS – Education Commission of the States

ERW – Evidence-Based Reading and Writing

IPEDS – Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

MTP – Metropolitan Tuition Policy

NCES – National Center for Education Statistics

NEASC – New England Association of Schools and Colleges

NERSP – New England Regional Student Program

RIC – Rhode Island College

RIGL – Rhode Island General Laws

RIHEAA – Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority

SUNY – State University of New York

URI – University of Rhode Island

I. Introduction

The composition of higher education governance in Rhode Island was altered with the adoption of Article 9 of the State of Rhode Island's Fiscal Year 2020 Budget. Article 9 establishes an independent board of trustees for the University of Rhode Island (URI) that will commence its work in February 2020. Article 9 therefore removes a portion of the Council on Postsecondary Education's oversight functions concerning URI. However, it makes no changes to the Council's mandate regarding Rhode Island's remaining two public institutions of higher learning: the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) and Rhode Island College (RIC).

The reorganization of systems of governance underway at URI presents an opportunity for state policymakers to consider the structure of higher education governance in Rhode Island and how state governance may be aligned between institutions and with statewide education goals. In other words, how should CCRI and RIC be governed in relation to each other and URI? This report lays the groundwork for answering that question by breaking down the relationship between the state's public postsecondary institutions and contextualizing the nature of higher education governance in the Ocean State through comparative analysis.

Section II of this report details Rhode Island's contemporary system of higher education governance and details the role of the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, as well as the system outlined in Article 9, which is set to take effect on February 1, 2020.

Section III describes in detail each of the state's three institutions of higher education: URI, CCRI, and RIC. It provides historical context, as well as contemporary data regarding faculty, the student body, and admissions.

Section IV provides a brief history of higher education governance in the United States and outlines the structures of higher education governance used today by each of the fifty states. Additionally, it provides a detailed look at the governance structures employed throughout the Northeast.

Section V is a literature review that engages with decades of scholarship by researchers whose work collectively adds to our understanding of how specific governance models affect student outcomes, research productivity, funding, and tuition costs.

Finally, Section VI details the recommendations offered by the Education Commission of the States (ECS), a non-profit education policy organization, for states that are restructuring models of higher education governance.

II. Article 9 and Education Governance in Rhode Island

H. 5151 SUB Aaa: Article 9

The Rhode Island Senate introduced Senate Bill 942 on May 30, 2019 and on June 4, 2019 the House introduced a companion bill, House Bill 6180. These bills aimed to establish a separate Board of Trustees (hereafter referred to as “the board”) for URI, moving oversight of the university from the Council on Postsecondary Education (hereafter referred to as “the council”) to the board. Allotting URI its own board was ultimately included in Article 9 of Rhode Island’s state budget for Fiscal Year 2020, House Bill 5151 Substitute A as Amended (hereafter referred to as “H. 5151 SUB Aaa”).

The Council on Postsecondary Education

Prior to Article 9 of H. 5151 SUB Aaa, all three of Rhode Island’s public institutions were overseen by the council. Once H. 5151 SUB Aaa takes effect on February 1, 2020, RIC and CCRI will remain under the council’s purview while the board will provide oversight for URI.

The council is comprised of eight voluntary members from the Board of Education (BOE) who are appointed by the governor of Rhode Island for a term of three years. Additionally, the governor appoints a non-voting student member from one of the three state schools to serve for a two-year term and annually appoints a chair from among the eight members. Finally, the chair of the BOE serves as an ex-officio voting member of the council.¹

The council is an independent public corporation that provides oversight for Rhode Island’s system of public higher education, maintains the office of the post-secondary commissioner, and governs the Division of Higher Education Assistance.² In addition to overseeing public higher education, the council is also responsible for gathering, processing, and analyzing information about the entirety of the higher education system in Rhode Island, both public and private, to ensure that current and future education needs are met in the state. In managing Rhode Island’s system of public higher education, the council is responsible for adopting and enforcing standards, appointing and dismissing presidents, approving vice presidents, appointing a commissioner of post-secondary education, and delegating to university and college presidents the authority and responsibility for most decision-making regarding their institutions. Additionally, the council is required to be the governing body and employer of record for the Division of Higher Education Assistance and is responsible for overseeing private higher education institutional certification. The council must have open meetings at least twice quarterly, and once members are appointed, they may only be removed by the governor for cause and with ten days written notice, the option for a public hearing, and the ability to appeal to Rhode Island Superior Court.³

¹ [Rhode Island General Laws \(RIGL\) §16-59-2](#). Ex officio means in virtue of an office and is used to describe council or board members who acquire that position by virtue of holding another position.

² [The Division of Higher Education Assistance](#) exists within the board as a replacement for the [Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority](#) (RIHEAA). Until Fiscal Year 2016 and the passage of [RIGL §16-56-6](#), RIHEAA was tasked with providing early outreach and college awareness programs, as well as providing financial assistance programs to qualified students and parents to increase post-secondary education participation in Rhode Island.

³ Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, [About the Council: Overview](#); [RIGL §16-59-1](#); [RIGL §16-59-4](#).

URI and Article 9

URI requested an independent board of trustees partly in response to a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Evaluation Report prepared by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education for URI's reaccreditation in 2017.⁴ Following a self-study report and site visit in October 2017, NEASC identified areas for improvement that included the external governance of URI by the council.⁵ The report stated that while the council had good intentions in creating a positive working relationship with URI, areas of ambiguity in terms of the scope and authority of both the commissioner and the council were matters of concern. NEASC highlighted potential conflict between aligning URI, RIC, and CCRI for the purpose of enhanced student and credit transferability with the council's goal of maintaining each institution's mission and needs. Additionally, it raised concern that the council's authority to approve all title changes and appointments and determine the salary of vice presidents may limit URI's ability to recruit and retain top talent.⁶

URI's board will be comprised of 17 members who will initially be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. Six members will be appointed for a term of three years, seven for a term of two years, and four for a term of one year. After their initial terms expire, nine members will be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. Two will be appointed for a term of three years, two for a term of two years, and two for a term of one year. The remaining three gubernatorial appointees will be appointed for terms not specified in legislation. The eight members not appointed by the governor will be self-perpetuating members. The length of self-perpetuating members' appointments will be determined by the board. Of the governor-appointed positions, three must be Rhode Island residents, one must come from a list of five individuals provided by the Speaker of the House, and one must come from a list of five individuals provided by the President of the Senate. In addition to the 17 voting board members, one student from URI, one faculty member from URI, the chair of the BOE, and the chair of the council will serve as non-voting ex-officio members.⁷

Once appointed, members may only be removed from the board by the appointing authority for cause and must be given ten days written notice and the option of a public hearing. Members may appeal their removal to the Rhode Island Superior Court.⁸

Under Article 9 of H. 5151 SUB Aaa, URI's newly established board is granted authority formerly held by the council, including the authority to appoint the president of URI, make decisions about program and course offerings, evaluate performance, handle the employment and management of faculty and staff, and manage the university's real and personal property. While the board will be granted the power to appoint URI's president, Article 9 does not give the board the power to

⁴ The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, [“Report to the Faculty, Administration, Students, Board of Governors of the University of Rhode Island.”](#)

⁵ NEASC defines a self-study as an “exercise in thoughtful reflection, analysis and strategic planning” that is composed of two parts, review and documentation of standard compliance, and analysis and response to the self-study committees' findings. See: [“Report to the Faculty, Administration, Students, Board of Governors of the University of Rhode Island.”](#)

⁶ [“Report to the Faculty, Administration, Students, Board of Governors of the University of Rhode Island.”](#)

⁷ [H. 5151 SUB Aaa.](#)

⁸ Ibid.

remove the president, though the council previously held this authority.⁹ Additionally, though the president's duties include helping to prepare and maintain a three-year strategic funding plan for the university, there is no requirement in the bill that the board produce a three-year strategic funding plan.¹⁰

Article 9 also gives the president of URI the responsibility of defining, monitoring, publishing, and reporting on performance metrics for the university to the board. These tasks were previously delegated to the commissioner as part of Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) §16-106-2.¹¹

In addition to restructuring URI's governance model by giving the university an institutional board of trustees, Article 9 also removes URI from RIGL §16-106-4, which lays out requirements for performance incentive funding. While Article 9 requires that URI and the board set metrics for evaluating the university's performance, funding is no longer tied to performance, and the authority to determine what metrics are used for performance analysis is left to the university's president. A portion of funding for both RIC and CCRI remains tied to performance metrics defined by the commissioner in consultation with the council.¹²

⁹ [RIGL §16-59-4\(7\)](#).

¹⁰ [H. 5151 SUB Aaa](#).

¹¹ [RIGL §16-106-2](#).

¹² [RIGL §16-106-3](#); [RIGL §16-106-4](#).

III. Rhode Island's Institutions of Public Higher Education

The public higher education system in Rhode Island is composed of three state institutions, CCRI, RIC, and URI, with campuses located across the state. A fourth public institution, the U.S. Naval War College, is in Newport, RI, but as it is a federal institution, it is not analyzed in this report.

Tables 1-5 highlight key characteristics of CCRI, RIC, and URI in terms of financial aid and tuition fees, staff, admittance rates, and degrees awarded. Tables that lay out the degree offerings of each of the three institutions are available in Appendix A of this report.

Table 1
Rhode Island Public Higher Education Student Populations, 2017

	Total Undergraduate Students	Full-time Undergraduate Students	Part-time Undergraduate Students	Total Graduate Students	Full-time Graduate Students	Part-time Graduate Students
CCRI	14,758	5,100	9,658	N/A	N/A	N/A
RIC	7,077	5,461	1,616	1,094	204	890
URI	15,107	12,629	2,478	2,982	1,797	1,185

SOURCE: NCES, IPEDS data, 2017

Table 2
Rhode Island Public Higher Education Degrees Awarded, 2017

	Associate's	Certificate	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate/ Professional
CCRI	1,661	204	N/A	N/A	N/A
RIC	N/A	83	1,435	276	9
URI	N/A	74	3,343	547	256

SOURCE: NCES, IPEDS data, 2017

Table 3
Rhode Island Public Higher Education Financial Aid and Costs, 2017

	% of Undergraduate Students Receiving Grant or Scholarship Aid	% of Undergraduate Students Receiving Pell Grants	% of Undergraduate Students Who Utilized Federal Loans	% of Full-time First-time Undergraduate Students Utilizing Student Aid	Average Net Cost of Attendance
CCRI	58.0%	54.0%	20.0%	64.0%	\$5,800
RIC	59.0%	42.0%	57.0%	88.0%	\$9,008
URI	71.0%	23.0%	64.0%	94.0%	\$18,739

SOURCE: NCES, IPEDS data, 2017

Table 4
Rhode Island Public Higher Education Staffing, 2017

	Total Staff	Total Instructors	Full-time Instructors	Part-time Instructors
CCRI	1,285	853	303	550
RIC	1,262	736	335	401
URI	3,136	1,145	757	388

SOURCE: NCES, IPEDS data, 2017

Table 5
Rhode Island Public Higher Education Applicant and Admittance Data, 2017

	Applicants	Admittance Rate	Percent Enrolled	SAT ERW* (25th-75th Percentile)	SAT Math (25th -75th Percentile)	Percent of Admitted Students RI Residents	Percent of Admitted Students Out of State Residents
CCRI**	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	96.0%	4.0%
RIC	4,846	73.6%	28.7%	450-560	430-530	81.0%	19.0%
URI	21,909	70.1%	20.6%	530-620	520-610	44.0%	56.0%

* ERW stands for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing

** CCRI has an open admission policy and therefore does not report some of the application and admissions data relevant to RIC and URI
SOURCE: NCES, IPEDS data, 2017

Community College of Rhode Island

In 1964, CCRI opened as Rhode Island Junior College.¹³ It has since grown to encompass four campuses located in Lincoln, Providence, Warwick, and Newport, as well as a satellite campus in Westerly.¹⁴ CCRI has a stated mission of providing open access higher education to “recent high school graduates and returning adults” across the state.¹⁵

As of fall 2017, CCRI had 14,758 undergraduate students enrolled, with 5,100 full-time and 9,658 part-time students.¹⁶ 96.0 percent of first-time undergraduates enrolled were Rhode Island residents, while the remaining 4.0 percent came from out-of-state.¹⁷ From July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, CCRI awarded 1,661 associates degrees and 204 Certificates.¹⁸

¹³ CCRI, [“Our History.”](#)

¹⁴ CCRI, [“About CCRI.”](#)

¹⁵ CCRI, [“Mission.”](#)

¹⁶ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2017 enrollment data.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 completion data.

During the 2016-17 academic year, 58.0 percent of undergraduate students received grant or scholarship aid, including 54.0 percent who received Pell Grants. Additionally, 20.0 percent of students utilized federal student loans.¹⁹ Of full-time, first-time students, 64.0 percent received student financial aid.²⁰ The average net cost of attendance in 2016-17 was \$5,800.²¹

In fall 2017, CCRI employed 1,285 staff members, which included 853 instructors. Of these instructors, 303 had full-time status and 550 worked part-time.²² Of the 550 part-time instructors, one was tenured and 549 did not have faculty status.²³

Because CCRI has an open admissions policy, admissions data that are available for RIC and URI are not available for CCRI.²⁴

Rhode Island College

RIC was founded in 1854 as the Rhode Island State Normal School and was exclusively focused on educating future teachers. It became a comprehensive higher education institution and gained its current name in 1959.²⁵ RIC's stated mission is to provide personalized undergraduate and graduate education to regional students.²⁶

As of fall 2017, RIC had 8,171 students enrolled with 7,077 undergraduate students and 1,094 graduate students. Of the 7,077 undergraduate students enrolled, 5,461 attended full-time and 1,616 attended part-time. 204 of RIC's 1,094 graduate students were enrolled full-time and 890 were enrolled part-time. 81.0 percent of first-time undergraduate students were Rhode Island residents, with 19.0 percent of students coming from out-of-state.²⁷ According to the Rhode Island College Fact Book, 2019 edition, 85.7 percent of the total student population were in-state students, 11.6 percent were participants of the Metropolitan Tuition Policy (MTP)/New England Regional Student Program (NERSP), and 2.6 percent were out-of-state residents.²⁸ From July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, RIC awarded 1,435 bachelor's degrees, 276 master's degrees, 9 doctor's research degrees, 36 certificates below bachelor's level, and 47 certificates above bachelor's level.²⁹

¹⁹ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 student financial aid data.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 net price data.

²² NCES, IPEDS, 2017 human resources data.

²³ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 data; NCES defines faculty status as a status designated by the institution but not extending to graduate assistants.

²⁴ CCRI, "[Admissions](#)."

²⁵ RIC, "[History](#)."

²⁶ RIC, "[Mission](#)."

²⁷ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 enrollment data.

²⁸ RIC, "[Fact Book Highlights/Quick Facts, 2018-2019](#)." MTP is a program allowing students with permanent residences within a 50-mile radius of RIC to pay in-state tuition plus 50.0 percent. NERP is a program that allows New England residents who live outside of Rhode Island to enroll in specified programs of study not offered at an institution in their home state or offered at an institution further from their permanent residence than RIC and pay in-state tuition plus 50.0 percent.

²⁹ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 completion data.

During the 2016-17 academic year, 59.0 percent of undergraduate students received grant or scholarship aid, including 42.0 percent who received Pell Grants. Additionally, 57.0 percent of students utilized federal student loans.³⁰ The percentage of full-time, first-time students who received student financial aid was 88.0 percent.³¹ The average net cost of attendance for full-time in state undergraduates in 2016-17 was \$9,008.³² In fall 2017, RIC employed 1,262 staff members, including 736 instructors. Of these instructors, 335 were full-time with faculty status and 401 were part-time without faculty status.³³

RIC received 4,846 applications for fall 2017. With 3,566 students admitted, RIC had an admittance rate of 73.6 percent. Of the 3,566 students admitted, 1,023 students, or 28.7 percent, enrolled on a full-time basis. Admitted first-time degree/certificate-seeking students had SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (ERW) scores ranging from a 25th percentile score of 450 to a 75th percentile score of 560. Math scores ranged from a 25th percentile score of 430 to a 75th percentile score of 530.³⁴

University of Rhode Island

URI was founded in 1888 as Rhode Island's Agricultural Experiment Station and Agricultural School. Through its history, URI has been known as both the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and the Rhode Island State College, acquiring its current name in 1951. URI is Rhode Island's flagship institution as well as a Land, Sea, and Urban Grant Public Research school.³⁵ URI's stated mission is to be a public "learner-centered research university."³⁶

As of fall 2017, URI had 18,089 students, including 15,107 undergraduate students and 2,982 graduate students. URI's undergraduate population was comprised of 12,629 full-time students and 2,478 part-time students, and the graduate population was comprised of 1,797 full-time and 1,185 part time students. Of first-time undergraduates enrolled in fall 2017, 44.0 percent were Rhode Island residents, 56.0 percent were from out of state, and 1.0 percent were international.³⁷ Of URI's total student population, 51.0 percent of students were from Rhode Island, while 49.0 percent were from out-of-state.³⁸ From July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, URI awarded 3,343 bachelor's degrees, 547 master's degrees, 256 doctor's and professional degrees, and 74 certificates.³⁹

During the 2016-17 academic year, 71.0 percent of URI's undergraduate students received grant or scholarship aid, including 23.0 percent who received Pell Grants. Additionally, 64.0 percent utilized federal student loans. Among full-time, first-time enrolled undergraduate students, 94.0 percent received student financial aid.⁴⁰ The average net cost of attendance for full-time in-state

³⁰ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 student financial aid data.

³¹ Ibid.

³² NCES, IPEDS, 2017 net price data.

³³ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 human resources data.

³⁴ NCES, IPEDS admissions and test scores data.

³⁵ URI, "[History](#)."

³⁶ URI, "[University Leadership](#)."

³⁷ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 enrollment data.

³⁸ URI, "[Undergraduate Admission: Quick Facts](#)."

³⁹ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 completion data.

⁴⁰ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 student financial aid data.

undergraduates in 2016-17 was \$18,739.⁴¹ URI employed 3,136 staff members in fall 2017, including 1,145 instructors, of which, 757 were full-time and 388 were part-time with faculty status.⁴²

URI received 21,909 applications for fall 2017 and had an admittance rate of 70.1 percent. Of the 15,349 students admitted, 3,163 students, or 20.6 percent, enrolled on a full-time basis. First-time degree/certificate seeking students who were admitted had SAT ERW scores ranging from a 25th percentile score of 530 to a 75th percentile score of 620. Math scores ranged from a 25th percentile score of 520 to a 75th percentile score of 610.⁴³

⁴¹ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 net price data.

⁴² NCES, IPEDS, 2017 human resources data.

⁴³ NCES, IPEDS, 2017 admissions and test scores data.

IV. Public Higher Education Governance in the United States

In the United States, each state has developed a different system for governing public higher education. This is the result of differences in higher education history, as well as the population, size, and politics of each state.

Higher Education Governance in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

States began to organize governance structures around public higher education in the 1930s, as public universities quickly grew and experienced increased subsidies. Early research largely supported greater centralization and subsidization of public higher education despite the Great Depression. The general theme of early research was that centralization would reduce competition, duplication, and inefficiency. Though some were concerned that centralization would decrease autonomy for public institutions and researchers, the predominate belief was that leaving institutions wholly without state government oversight was unwise.⁴⁴

Centralization continued from the 1930s through the '70s. During this period, higher education grew both in size and complexity, postsecondary education came into higher demand, and universities came to rely more on federal dollars. At the state level, higher education governance became more centralized as state legislatures professionalized and exerted greater control over state agencies. As a result, states around the nation began exercising greater authority over public higher education through the creation of consolidated state-level boards as well as through procedural regulation.⁴⁵

Many researchers during this time argued for greater centralization but cautioned that too much oversight could decrease institutional autonomy and result in reduced quality and originality. Research from the 1950s-1970s was focused on identifying different types of governance systems, examining trends in higher education governance, and offering recommendations about what balance should exist between state and campus control over institutions. Though there was not consensus over what system of governance was most effective, many researchers promoted the use of a coordinating board that balanced the state's interest in higher education and the institution's interest in self-governance.⁴⁶

In the 1980s and '90s, higher education governance in the U.S. entered into a period of volatility as some states moved to centralize and others moved to decentralize their systems of higher education governance. Of these conflicting developments, the move to deregulate and decentralize has been more thoroughly studied.

The literature points to two cycles of deregulation: one in the early 1980s and a second in the late 1990s. Both cycles were fueled by economic downturns as well as a growing focus on decreasing costs and increasing quality. Deregulation was carried out in one of four ways:

⁴⁴ McLendon (2003) *State Governance Reform of Higher Education: Patterns, trends, and theories of the public policy process*.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

1. Giving institutions more control over tuition, budgeting, personnel, and finance while keeping state-level coordinating and governing boards in place;
2. Breaking up multi-campus systems and giving each new institution its own governing board;
3. Granting institutions corporate identity through reconstruction as a public corporation; and
4. Overhauling state-level coordinating and governing structures, weakening the power of boards, and/or restructuring state-level boards into multiple system boards.⁴⁷

Less studied during this period were states that restructured coordinating boards to provide for greater statewide oversight and regulation. In the late 1980s, eight states reorganized their state boards of higher education governance in order to give the boards more power over regulations, master planning, and/or policy leadership. There was little research regarding the impacts of these changes. Another form of centralization popular in the late '80s was consolidating boards from different institutions to create larger education systems.⁴⁸

In the first two decades of the twenty-first century, as government leadership changed and many state boards lost executives due to term limits or retirement, the influence of boards over the state budgeting process declined. Paired with the Great Recession in 2007-2008, this change resulted in decreased state funding for public institutions at the same time there was increased public demand for access to higher education. As institutions gained more flexibility and power over their own operations in the twenty-first century, many state higher education agencies have shifted focus from governance to coordination and alignment.⁴⁹

Higher Education Governance Structures in the United States

Though each state system has developed differently, the Education Commission of the States (ECS) has identified four general types of governance structures:

1. A single, statewide governing board;
2. A single, statewide coordinating board/agency;
3. One or more systemwide coordinating or governing boards; and
4. Administrative/service agencies.⁵⁰

Researchers have used this classification structure to rank states based on their level of centralized control of higher education to study the effects of higher education governance on cost, funding,

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Tandberg (2013) *The Conditioning Role of State Higher Education Governance Structures*.

⁵⁰ ECS, "[High-Level Analysis of Postsecondary Governance Structures](#)." While this report is not the only instance of ECS issuing a report with a classification system designed to help researchers better identify distinct governance models, it is the most contemporary.

productivity, and student outcomes.⁵¹ Table 6 illustrates how ECS classifies each state's governance model within its 2019 classification system.⁵²

State	Single, Statewide Governing Board	Single, Statewide Coordinating Board	One or more Systemwide Board	Administrative Board/Agency
Alabama		x		
Alaska	x			x
Arizona			x	x
Arkansas		x		
California			x	
Colorado		x		
Connecticut			x	x
Delaware				x
Florida			x	x
Georgia			x	
Hawaii	x			
Idaho	x			
Illinois		x		
Indiana		x		
Iowa			x	x
Kansas	x			
Kentucky		x		
Louisiana		x		
Maine			x	
Maryland		x		
Massachusetts		x		
Michigan				
Minnesota			x	x
Mississippi			x	
Missouri		x		
Montana	x			
Nebraska		x		
Nevada	x			
New Hampshire			x	x
New Jersey				x
New Mexico		x		
New York			x	x
North Carolina			x	
North Dakota	x			
Ohio		x		
Oklahoma		x		
Oregon		x		
Pennsylvania			x	x
Rhode Island	x			
South Carolina		x		
South Dakota			x	
Tennessee		x		
Texas		x		
Utah			x	
Vermont			x	
Virginia		x		
Washington		x		
West Virginia			x	
Wisconsin			x	
Wyoming			x	

SOURCE: Education Commission of the States (2019) *High Level Analysis of State Postsecondary Governance Structures*

⁵¹ Tandberg (2013) *The Conditioning Role of State Higher Education Governance Structures*; McLendon (2003) *State Governance Reform of Higher Education: Patterns, trends, and theories of the public policy process*; Knott, J., and Payne, A.A. (2004) *The Impact of State Governance Structures on Management and Performance of Public Organizations: A Study of Higher Education Institutions*.

⁵² [“High-Level Analysis of Postsecondary Governance Structures.”](#)

Single, statewide coordinating boards or agencies are utilized by 20 states. This classification is characterized by a single board responsible for key aspects of the state's authority over public postsecondary institutions. Coordinating boards or agencies are additionally responsible for coordinating higher education efforts statewide.⁵³

Single, statewide governing boards are utilized by eight states. Governing boards manage and oversee most, if not all, functions of the public higher education system with broad authority over institutions. In comparison to statewide coordinating boards, governing boards tend to have more control over states' public institutions.⁵⁴

19 states have one or more systemwide coordination or governing boards. Systemwide boards oversee one or more institutions within a state's public higher education system but do not operate on a statewide level. Compared to statewide coordinating and governing boards, systemwide boards have less control over statewide education functions.⁵⁵

Finally, administrative or service agencies are utilized by 11 states. Administrative and service agencies oversee information and data services, financial aid, academic programs, and/or institutional licensing. States often utilize administrative or service agencies in conjunction with system-level or institution-level boards. In 2019, two states, New Jersey and Delaware, utilized solely an administrative or service agency, while one state, Michigan, did not have any state or system-level boards or agencies.⁵⁶

Until the passage of Article 9, Rhode Island was categorized by ECS as a state with a single, statewide governing board. However, with the establishment of URI's institutional governing board, Rhode Island would be classified as having one or more systemwide coordinating or governing boards.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Higher Education Governance Structures in the Northeast

Table 7 illustrates ECS classifications for the Northeastern United States.⁵⁷ This table shows that Rhode Island’s single, statewide governing board made the state a regional outlier; most Northeastern states—Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont—have one or more systemwide boards. In Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, and Pennsylvania, systemwide boards are paired with an administrative board or agency. Like Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Jersey are regional outliers; Massachusetts has a single statewide coordinating board and New Jersey has an administrative board/agency.

Table 7
Northeastern U.S. State Higher Education Governance Structures, 2019

State	Single, Statewide Governing Board	Single, Statewide Coordinating Board	One or more Systemwide Board	Administrative Board/Agency
Connecticut			x	x
Maine			x	
Massachusetts		x		
New Hampshire			x	x
New Jersey				x
New York			x	x
Pennsylvania			x	x
Rhode Island	x			
Vermont			x	

SOURCE: Education Commission of the States (2019) *High Level Analysis of State Postsecondary Governance Structures*

The following in-depth analysis of each Northeastern state’s governance structure further highlights variation across the region.

Connecticut

Connecticut’s system of public higher education is organized around two separate boards.⁵⁸ The Board of Regents governs state colleges, community colleges, and a public online college. The board has the power to set tuition and fees, establish academic programs, and select campus presidents. Additionally, the board is responsible for the development and coordination of statewide policy for higher education. The Board of Regents is composed of 15 voting members,

⁵⁷ The [U.S. Census Bureau defines](#) the Northeast region as including the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

⁵⁸ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Connecticut State Profile](#), 2019.

with nine appointed by the governor, four appointed by legislative leadership, and two students chosen by their peers.⁵⁹

The second board, the Board of Trustees, governs the University of Connecticut with the power to appoint the president, determine university policy, manage assets, and make laws for university government.⁶⁰ The Board of Trustees is made up of 21 members, with 12 appointed by the governor, two elected by alumni, two elected by students, and five ex-officio members.⁶¹

In addition to the two boards, there is also an administrative/service agency, the Connecticut Office of Higher Education, which oversees data and information services, student financial aid, and any other duties pertaining to the implementation and monitoring of federal programs.⁶²

Maine

Maine's higher education system is overseen by two boards that are assisted by two administrative offices as well as an administrative entity. The University of Maine System Board of Trustees governs the state's seven public four-year institutions. It is comprised of sixteen members, including one student, who are appointed by the governor and approved by the legislature. Additionally, the commissioner of education serves as a voting ex-officio member.⁶³

The Maine Community College System Board of Trustees is responsible for the state's two-year institutions. It is comprised of fifteen members, twelve of whom are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the legislature. There must be at least one representative from the fields of business and industry, labor, and education on the board, as well as one student member. The commissioners of education and labor function as ex-officio voting members.⁶⁴

Each board is responsible for appointing the chancellor or president of the system while their administrative offices implement board policies, oversee programs, and provide administrative support to institutions. Additionally, an administrative agency, the Finance Authority of Maine, is responsible for administering financial aid, supporting professional development, and conducting student financial assistance outreach efforts.⁶⁵

Massachusetts

The higher education system in Massachusetts is overseen by a single statewide coordinating board, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.⁶⁶ The board is made up of 13 voting members, with nine appointed by the governor, three representing institutions of public higher

⁵⁹ Of the four legislative appointees, one must be a specialist in K-12 education and three must be alumni of the Connecticut Community Colleges, Connecticut State Universities, and/or Charter Oak State College. [Connecticut Board of Regents](#).

⁶⁰ University of Connecticut, "[Policies & Procedures](#)."

⁶¹ University of Connecticut, "[Board of Trustees](#)."

⁶² ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Connecticut State Profile](#), 2019.

⁶³ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Maine State Profile](#), 2019.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Massachusetts State Profile](#), 2019.

education, and the secretary of education serving in an ex-officio capacity.⁶⁷ The board is responsible for coordinating higher education management and operations, including approving institutional mission statements, overseeing financial aid, approving and fixing compensation of the chief executive officer, and analyzing present and future goals and needs.⁶⁸

The board has a different level of authority over the University of Massachusetts system than it does over other state universities and community colleges. The University of Massachusetts has its own institutional governing board, the Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts, which is responsible for setting tuition and fees, managing real and personal property, establishing and operating programs, and all other duties and powers traditionally granted to a governing board. All other state universities and community colleges have their own institutional boards. However, these institutional boards have fewer powers than the University of Massachusetts Board.⁶⁹

While each institutional board has the power to prepare mission statements and five year plans, as well as set fees and institutional policies, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education maintains the power to set tuition, define new functions or programs, manage property, and develop performance measures for the state universities and community colleges not within the University of Massachusetts system. A member from the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees, a state university's board of trustees, and a community college's board of trustees each serve on the Board of Higher Education.⁷⁰

New Hampshire

New Hampshire does not have a single statewide board that governs or coordinates its higher education system. Instead, New Hampshire relies on two boards and an administrative/service agency to oversee its public higher education system.⁷¹ The University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees is a governing board that is responsible for public four-year institutions. It is comprised of 29 members, including ten appointed by the governor, seven alumni-elected members, two student-elected members, and nine ex-officio members. It is responsible for setting tuition rates, choosing (and setting compensation for) the chancellor and presidents, developing mission statements for the system and its institutions, and providing budget and management oversight.⁷²

A second governing board, the Community College System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees, oversees public two-year institutions. It is composed of 36 members, with 24 appointed by the governor and 12 ex-officio members. The board is responsible for approving the hiring and compensation rates of presidents, developing system plans and institutional missions, approving and recommending budgets, and setting institutional policies.⁷³

⁶⁷ Massachusetts General Laws [15A §4](#).

⁶⁸ Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, "[Summary of Major Powers and Duties](#)."

⁶⁹ Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, "[Higher Ed Authority Overview](#)."

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [New Hampshire State Profile](#), 2019.

⁷² [University System of New Hampshire](#), "[Trustee Roles & Responsibilities](#)."

⁷³ Ibid.

Finally, an administrative agency, the Division of Higher Education, is responsible for overseeing federal programs, administering student financial aid, and providing data and information services for the boards.⁷⁴

New Jersey

Unlike other states in the Northeast, New Jersey has no state- or system-level board. It is instead overseen by two administrative agencies. The State of New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education is responsible for policy development and statewide planning, higher education advocacy, state and federal program administration, and data and research reporting. The New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority is responsible for administering student financial aid programs.⁷⁵ New Jersey once had a statewide coordinating board with much broader powers over institutions. However, in 1994 the Board of Higher Education and the Department of Higher Education were eliminated. In their place, New Jersey established a much smaller administrative office with the goals of balancing school autonomy with public accountability and preventing conflicts between institutions.⁷⁶

New York

In New York, higher education is overseen by three boards and two administrative/service agencies. New York public higher education is comprised of two systems of higher education, the State University of New York (SUNY) system, and the City University of New York (CUNY) system.⁷⁷ Each system is overseen by a governing board that has authority over the policies, operations, and procedures of institutions in their system. These boards are additionally responsible for appointing chancellors and presidents, setting tuition and fees, and regulating student admission and continued attendance.⁷⁸ SUNY's board is comprised of 18 members, 15 of whom are appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate. Additional members include the president of the student assembly, who serves as a voting ex-officio member, and the presidents of the university faculty senate and the faculty council of community colleges, who serve as non-voting ex-officio members. CUNY's board is also comprised of 17 members, ten of whom are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, and five of whom are appointed by New York City's mayor with the advice and consent of the Senate. In addition, SUNY's board includes the chairperson of the university student senate in a voting ex-officio capacity and the chairperson of the university faculty senate in a non-voting ex-officio capacity.

Both the SUNY and CUNY systems are overseen by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, which is responsible for all public education activities in the state. The Board of Regents is comprised of 17 members who are elected from the legislature, with one member representing each of the state's 13 judicial districts and four members serving at large.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [New Jersey State Profile](#), 2019.

⁷⁶ *The Five-Year Assessment of Higher Education Restructuring: A joint report of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and the New Jersey Presidents' Council*, July 1999.

⁷⁷ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [New York State Profile](#), 2019.

⁷⁸ SUNY, "[Board of Trustees](#)"; CUNY, "[General Policy](#)."

⁷⁹ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [New York State Profile](#), 2019.

In addition to the three boards, there are two administrative/service agencies that operate within New York's system of public higher education. The first is the Office of Higher Education within the education department of New York, which is responsible for overseeing federal programs, conducting college outreach, and authorizing institutions and academic degree programs. The second, the Higher Education Services Corporation, is responsible for administering financial aid programs across New York.⁸⁰

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania does not have a statewide board for the coordination or governance of higher education, but rather has two systemwide boards, local boards, institutional boards, and two service agencies.⁸¹ The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Board of Governors regulates 14 of the state's four-year schools. It is responsible for appointing the chancellor and university presidents, setting tuition and budget, and approving new academic programs. Each school within this system has its own institutional board responsible for setting policies.⁸² The Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees is responsible for overseeing the multi-campus system of Pennsylvania State University. It is responsible for overseeing all campuses, setting policies and procedures for day-to-day management, appointing presidents, identifying major goals of the university, determining tuition and fees, and establishing and assessing an annual budget.⁸³ The remaining four-year public institutions not included in the Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education or Pennsylvania State University are overseen by institution-level governing boards, while community colleges in the state are overseen by local governing boards. Higher and Career Education in the Department of Education approves new institutions and programs, grants degrees, and provides data and information services. Additionally, Pennsylvania's Higher Education Assistance Authority is responsible for overseeing student financial aid assistance.⁸⁴

Vermont

Vermont does not have a statewide coordinating or governing board. The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees is a governing board that is responsible for two- and four-year public institutions, not including the University of Vermont. The board is comprised of 15 members, with five appointed by the governor, four by the legislature, four elected by the board, one student chosen by the student government, and the governor serving as an ex-officio member. The board is responsible for hiring and determining compensation for presidents, developing master strategies for higher education, setting policies and procedures for day-to-day operations, and promoting and advocating for institutions.⁸⁵

The University of Vermont is not overseen by the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees and is instead governed by the University of Vermont Board of Trustees.⁸⁶ The board for the University of Vermont is composed of 25 members, with nine selected by the legislature, three appointed by

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Pennsylvania State Profile](#), 2019.

⁸² Ibid; Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education, "[About the System](#)."

⁸³ "[Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Pennsylvania State University](#)." Amended May 3, 2019.

⁸⁴ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Pennsylvania State Profile](#), 2019.

⁸⁵ ECS, Postsecondary Governance Structures, [Vermont State Profile](#), 2019.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

the governor, nine self-perpetuating members, and two students. The governor of the state and the president of the university serve as ex-officio members. The board is responsible for managing property, approving policies and procedures for day-to-day operations, approving budgets, managing short- and long-term planning, and appointing the president.⁸⁷

In addition to regional geography, it is important to consider the size and scale of systems while comparing higher education governance structures. Table 8 outlines each Northeastern state’s public higher education system in terms of number of institutions, number of students, and number of boards. A more detailed breakdown of institution and student population data in the Northeast can be found in Appendix B of this report.

State	ECS Board Classification	Administrative Board/Agency	Number of Boards	Board Descriptions	Total Postsecondary Institutions	Public Institutions	Private Institutions	Total Postsecondary Students	Public Institution Students	Private Institution Students
Connecticut	One or More Systemwide Boards	Yes	2	The Board of Trustees - University of Connecticut; The Board of Regents - All other state colleges and community colleges	39	19	20	198,578	117,134	81,444
Maine	One or More Systemwide Boards	No	2	The University of Maine System Board of Trustees - Four-year institutions; Maine Community College System Board of Trustees - Two-year institutions	31	15	16	71,811	46,999	24,812
Massachusetts	Single Statewide Coordinating	No	1	The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education - oversees all higher education Universities each have their own boards, Umass has more control than other Universities	116	31	85	503,508	213,389	290,119
New Hampshire	One or More Systemwide Boards	Yes	2	The University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees - Public four-year institutions Community College System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees - Public two-year institutions	25	13	12	149,199	39,761	109,438
New Jersey	No Board	Yes	0	No board Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York - Oversees all public education in the state	74	32	42	419,783	334,597	119,632
New York	One or More Systemwide Boards	Yes	3	SUNY Board of Trustees - Oversees the State University of New York System CUNY Board of Trustees - Oversees the City University of New York system	299	81	218	1,202,821	696,323	506,498
Pennsylvania	One or More Systemwide Boards	Yes	2	Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Board of Governors - Governs schools in the Pennsylvania State System; Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees - Governs multi-campus system of the Pennsylvania State University; All other public higher education institutions governed by local or institutional boards	243	63	180	724,737	400,943	323,794
Rhode Island	Single Statewide Governing*	No	2	Council on Postsecondary Education - Governs RIC and CCRI; URI Board of Trustees* - Governs URI beginning in February 2020	14	4**	10	82,901	41,018	41,883
Vermont	One or More Systemwide Boards	No	2	Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees - All public institutions except for the University of Vermont; University of Vermont Board of Trustees - The University of Vermont	21	5	16	41,156	22,601	18,555

*ECS's classification occurred prior to Article 9 of H. 5151 Sub Aaa; as of February 2020, Rhode Island will be classified as having one or more systemwide boards
** Because the Carnegie Classification system treats federal schools as public institutions, this number includes the United States Naval War College
SOURCE: The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education; NCES, IPEDS data, 2017

⁸⁷ University of Vermont, “[Trustees](#).”

V. Literature Review

Over the last several decades, researchers have provided essential insight into the question of how to best model higher education governance, analyzing the effects of different models on student outcomes, research productivity, funding, and tuition costs. In this literature review, RIPEC breaks down the findings of this research in order to better contextualize contemporary debates regarding higher education governance. However, it is important to note that determining the effects of higher education governance models can be difficult as a result of both a large level of variation that exists in higher education governance in the United States and frequent changes to governance systems within the states. Additionally, consensus can be elusive due to inconsistencies in system classification, varying data definitions, and differences in identification of satisfactory outcomes.

Although variation in research methods remain, researchers began to carry out systematic analyses in the 1980s.⁸⁸ One of the longest-running set of studies examining the campus-level impact of higher education governance has been performed by researcher J.F. Volkwein from the late '80s through present-day. His research showed that when controlling for organizational, economic, and enrollment variables, state regulatory powers were unrelated to campus financial outcomes such as expenditures, salaries, endowments, and grants. He also found no connection between state regulation and institutional outcomes such as undergraduate quality and facility productivity. His studies showed that institution size and state funding amounts were better predictors of both financial and institutional outcomes than governance models, and that even when the structures of governance changed, there was not a dramatic change in institutional performance.⁸⁹

The only exception found in Volkwein's studies pertains to universities with more management flexibility; these institutions typically received a larger percentage of revenues from non-state funding sources, such as private grants, alumni donations, and endowments. Other studies have supported these findings, suggesting that institutions with flexible management use resources to compete for better faculty and students, and therefore improve student outcomes.⁹⁰

In contrast, researcher and professor Robert Lowery found in a 2001 study that institutions operating under boards with more regulatory powers were more likely to have relatively low tuition prices. He attributes this difference to the fact that boards with greater centralized powers are more likely to experience political pressure to keep tuition prices low and access open. Higher education policy researcher Michael K. McLendon, in his 2003 analysis of existing higher education governance research, attributes the difference in research conclusions between Lowery and Volkwein's studies to differences in dependent variables and definitions.⁹¹

Lowery's finding that tuitions are typically lower in more centralized systems was challenged by researchers James C. Hearn, Carolyn P. Griswold, and Ginger M. Marine from the University of

⁸⁸ Tandberg (2013) *The Conditioning Role of State Higher Education Governance Structures*; McLendon (2003) *State Governance Reform of Higher Education: Patterns, trends, and theories of the public policy process*.

⁸⁹ Volkwien and Tanberg (2007), *Measuring Up: Examining the Connections Among State Structural Characteristics, Regulatory Practices, and Performance*.

⁹⁰ McLendon (2003) *State Governance Reform of Higher Education: Patterns, trends, and theories of the public policy process*.

⁹¹ Ibid.

Georgia. Their research examined the effects of higher education governance structures on policy decisions regarding tuition and state aid allotment. They hypothesized that states with more centralized governance systems would see higher tuition and higher aid patterns than in states with less centralization. However, while they found data supported their hypothesis that strong coordinating boards fostered higher tuition and aid policies, they also found that states with planning agencies, the least centralized higher education governance structures, also tended to have relatively high tuition and aid policies.⁹²

In a separate study, Hearn and Griswold analyzed the impact of higher education governance on policy innovation. While they found that governance structures had a significant impact on policy innovation, their expectation that states with more centralized governance structures would show more policy innovation as a result of an increased capacity to produce policies was not entirely supported. Their research showed that, as hypothesized, consolidated governing boards and strong coordinating boards were more likely to have greater policy innovation in terms of academics, finance, and teacher education. However, they also found that planning agencies were more likely to adopt innovative teacher certification policies and that though centralized boards were frequent innovators of many types of financial policies they were not associated significantly with policies aimed at increasing affordability.⁹³

Researchers Michael K. McLendon, Donald E. Heller, and Steven P. Young also examined the relationship between higher education policy innovation and governance systems by examining policy adoption patterns of state governments. In contrast to the findings of Hearn and Griswold, McLendon, Heller, and Young found that centralized boards were a weak predictor of policies aimed at affordability. Additionally, they found no relationship between centralized governance and accountability policies.⁹⁴

There is limited research on the effects of revising systems of higher education governance at the state level. Case studies conducted on states that passed policies aimed at deregulation or decentralization to increase institutional autonomy have been increasing in number and have found three general patterns:

1. Greater autonomy is beneficial to individual campuses;
2. Autonomy has not resulted in large administrative growth or massive tuition increases (as critics predicted); and
3. Statewide planning often suffers, resulting in the duplication of programs and increased competition for state funding.⁹⁵

In 2004, Jack H. Knott and A. Abigail Payne used data collected from 1987 to 1998 to examine how different governance structures impact the management and performance of higher education

⁹² Ibid; Hearn, J.C., Griswold, C.P., and Marine, G. (1996). "Region, resources, and reason: a contextual analysis of state tuition and student aid policies," *Research in Higher Education* 37(1): 241-278.

⁹³ Hearn, J.C., and Griswold, C.P. (1994) "State-level centralization and policy innovation in U.S. postsecondary education," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 16(2): 161-190.

⁹⁴ McLendon, M.K., Heller, D., and Young, S. (2001) *State postsecondary policy innovation: politics, competition, and interstate migration of policy ideas*.

⁹⁵ McLendon (2003) *State Governance Reform of Higher Education: Patterns, trends, and theories of the public policy process*.

institutions. They found that, in most cases, productivity and resources are higher at institutions that are overseen by less centralized state boards with fewer regulatory powers. The researchers looked at total revenue, tuition revenue, state appropriations, in- and out-of-state tuition rates, endowments, and total research funding to determine resources. They also looked at the number of articles published and citations per article to determine productivity rates.⁹⁶

When examining the impact of state-level regulation, they found that, across all measures, institutions with more regulation had fewer resources and lower productivity than institutions with less regulatory oversight. When considering only flagship institutions, this pattern continued; all variables except endowments were highest for lightly regulated institutions and lowest for highly regulated institutions. When researchers controlled for differences in institutional and state-level characteristics, they found that governance structure becomes less impactful on the resources and productivity of all institutions but most significantly for flagship universities. The researchers posit that level of centralization impacts how flagship institutions in particular respond to the public agendas of lowering tuition and shifting institutional focus from research to student outcomes.⁹⁷

Knott and Payne also found that though institutions in less regulated and more decentralized systems have greater access to revenue through larger endowments and higher state appropriations, tuition costs do not go down, but instead are positively correlated with state appropriations. From this finding, Knott and Payne conclude that political pressure helps to regulate tuition costs and prevent flagship institutions from acting like private institutions.⁹⁸

In a 2013 study, researcher David A. Tandberg examined the impact of consolidated governing boards on state support for higher education. The goal of the study was to fill gaps in knowledge about how governance structures influence state higher education policy. Using data from 1976 to 2004 from all 50 states, Tandberg found that higher education appropriations were impacted by the existence of a consolidated governing board of higher education. He found that consolidated governing boards buffer the effects of higher education interest groups and magnify the influence of the governor and legislature. He consequently hypothesized that a consolidated governing board has a buffering effect on higher education interest groups, limiting the ability of institutions to lobby and leading to lower state appropriations for higher education. Tandberg also found that in the presence of a consolidated governing board both the governor and the legislature have magnified influence in terms of institutional policymaking. As a result of his findings, Tandberg writes that governance structures employed for higher education act as boundary-spanning organizations, impacting how political actors affect state higher education budgeting. However, Tandberg also highlights how little is known about the true effects of higher education governance, pointing to the fact that researchers frequently use different measures as well as to political and social differences across states.⁹⁹

As Tandberg's research highlights, significant gaps remain in understanding how and why higher education governance structures impact student and institutional outcomes.

⁹⁶ Knott, J., and Payne, A.A. (2004) *The Impact of State Governance Structures on Management and Performance of Public Organizations: A Study of Higher Education Institutions*.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Tandberg, D. A. (2013) *The Conditioning Role of State Higher Education Governance Structures*.

VI. Education Commission of the States Recommendations for Governance Restructuring

In 2016, ECS released “State Policy Leadership for the Future: History of State Coordination and Governance and Alternatives for the Future.” Written by Aims McGuinness, a Senior Fellow with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, this report examines the history and trends of higher education governance in the United States and offers recommendations to states considering reform. More specifically, it argues that there should be four components in a state’s governance structure:

- 1) Statewide policy leadership;
- 2) Statewide coordination/implementation of cross-sector initiatives;
- 3) State service administration; and
- 4) System and institutional governance.

According to ECS, each component identified requires a different set of actors and actions to ensure success. In consequence, ECS suggests that rather than relying on a single entity to oversee all aspects of higher education governance, multiple entities should be involved in each recommended governance component.

To manage statewide policy leadership, ECS recommends that the executive branch, legislative leaders, higher education leadership, and state business and civic leadership should all participate in defining a 10 to 15-year strategic plan for higher education in the state. This plan should include the defined goals, state policies, and budget appropriations needed to support the long-term plan. ECS also recommends that the group responsible for policy leadership utilize short-term action plans and annual reports to ensure steady progress towards state goals.

ECS suggests that the second component—statewide coordination/implementation of cross-sector initiatives—should be carried out by a single entity, ideally an existing statewide board if one already exists or by a new independent unit. The purpose of this component is to promote coordination among public higher education institutions, public systems of elementary and secondary education, workforce and economic development organizations, and adult education. ECS recommends that coordination is assisted through mission differentiation, data system maintenance, data analysis, and issue analysis/problem solving performed by a single entity.

ECS recommends that the third component—state service agency administration—should be conducted separately from the entity carrying out policy leadership actions defined by the first component. It argues that it can be easy for an entity’s agenda to be dominated by student financial aid and licensing of non-state institutions, leaving little time for statewide coordination and strategic planning. ECS suggests that it would be beneficial for a subsidiary unit to be formed as a quasi-independent subgroup from the state coordinating or governing board to ensure that the board focuses primarily on implementing and tracking higher education management and regulation and carrying out day-to-day operations.

The fourth and final component identified by ECS is an entity focused on system and institutional governance. ECS recommends that in states with statewide boards, no single board should be responsible for both setting policy and advocating for higher education. It recommends that, in

these states, a governing or coordinating board should be responsible for providing staff support and having representation within the policy leadership group but the board itself should not be solely responsible for setting policy positions. The board should instead be tasked with implementing statewide goals and action plans, as well as advocating for higher education institutions within the state. In states with multiple boards, as will be the case in Rhode Island, ECS recommends that, in addition to the multiple boards tasked with overseeing one or more institutions, there should be a separate entity responsible for setting statewide policy goals and action plans.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ McGuinness, A. (May 2016) "[State Policy Leadership for the Future: History of State Coordination and Governance and Alternatives for the Future.](#)"

Appendix A: Program Offerings at Rhode Island Public Postsecondary Institutions

CCRI Program Offerings	
Associate Degrees	Certificate Programs
<p>BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION Accounting Financial Services General Business Management Marketing CHEMISTRY Chemical Technology COMMUNICATION and FILM/MEDIA Communication Film/Media COMPUTER STUDIES and INFORMATION PROCESSING Computer Programming Computer and Networking Technology Computer Desktop Technology Concentration Computer Networking Technology Concentration Cybersecurity General Information Processing Information Technology Support Specialist Networking Web Technologies FILM/MEDIA Film/Media FINE ARTS Art Theatre - Performance Concentration Theatre - Technical Concentration Music - Jazz Studies Concentration Music - Music Concentration GENERAL STUDIES General Studies HEALTH SCIENCES ALLIED HEALTH PROGRAMS Diagnostic Medical Sonography Histotechnician Medical Laboratory Technology Radiography (X-ray) Respiratory Therapy DENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS Dental Hygiene EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT Emergency Management/Homeland Security Fire Science/Emergency Medical Technician NURSING PROGRAMS Nursing Practical Nursing REHABILITATIVE HEALTH PROGRAMS Occupational Therapy Assistant Opticianry Physical Therapist Assistant Therapeutic Massage HUMAN SERVICES Early Childhood Education and Child Development Education/Special Education Social Service Majors: Gerontology Mental Health Social Work Substance Abuse CRIMINAL JUSTICE and LEGAL STUDIES Law Enforcement Paralegal Studies LIBERAL ARTS Liberal Arts Liberal Arts – English Liberal Arts – Foreign Languages PHYSICS and ENGINEERING Advanced Manufacturing Technology CNC Manufacturing Concentration Electrical Concentration Energy Concentration Mechanical Concentration Biomedical Concentration Chemical Concentration Chem-Biology Concentration Civil Concentration Computer Concentration Electrical Concentration Industrial Concentration Mechanical Concentration Ocean Concentration PROFESSIONAL STUDIES Administrative Assistant/Secretary Legal Administrative Assistant/Secretary Medical Administrative Assistant/Secretary SCIENCE Science TECHNICAL STUDIES Technical Studies</p>	<p>BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION Accounting Certificate Entrepreneurship Certificate Financial Services Certificate Management Certificate Marketing Certificate CHEMISTRY Chemical Technology Certificate COMMUNICATION and FILM/MEDIA New Media Production Certificate New Media Post Production Certificate New Media Studies Certificate New Media Communication Certificate COMPUTER STUDIES and INFORMATION PROCESSING Computer Programming Certificate Computer Desktop Technician Certificate Networking Technician Certificate Advanced Networking Technician Certificate General Information Processing Certificate Information Technology Support Specialist Certificate Networking Certificate Office Automation Certificate Web Technologies Certificate FILM/MEDIA New Media Production Certificate New Media Post Production Certificate HEALTH SCIENCES ALLIED HEALTH PROGRAMS Computed Tomography Imaging Magnetic Resonance Imaging Certificate Phlebotomy Certificate Renal Dialysis Technology Certificate DENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS Dental Assisting Certificate EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT Emergency/Disaster Management Certificate Homeland Security Certificate NURSING PROGRAMS Health Care Interpreter REHABILITATIVE HEALTH PROGRAMS Therapeutic Massage Certificate HUMAN SERVICES Early Childhood Education Certificate Gerontology Certificate Social Service Majors: Social Services Certificate PHYSICS and ENGINEERING Manufacturing Design and Rapid Prototyping Advanced Manufacturing Machining Certificate Manufacturing Automation and Quality Certificate CNC Manufacturing and 3D-Modeling Certificate Introduction to CNC Manufacturing Certificate Energy Utility Technology Certificate PROFESSIONAL STUDIES Basic Office Skills Certificate Customer Service Specialist Certificate Hospitality Certificate Legal Office Assistant Certificate Medical Insurance Billing Specialist Certificate Medical Transcription Certificate Office Administration Certificate Travel and Tourism Certificate</p>
SOURCE: https://www.ccri.edu/programs/	

RIC Undergraduate Course Offerings					
BA	BS	BFA	BM	BSN	BSW
Africana Studies Anthropology Studio Art Ceramics Graphic Design Metalsmithing and Jewelry Painting Photography Printmaking Sculpture Digital Media Design Art Education Art History Applied Technology Chemistry Chemistry Environmental Chemistry Communication Journalism Media Communications Public and Professional Communication Public Relations and Advertising Speech, Language, and Hearing Science Computer Science Dance Performance Economics Elementary Education English Major* General Science Major Mathematics Major Multidisciplinary Studies Major* Social Studies* English English Creative Writing Environmental Studies Film Studies Gender and Women's Studies Geography Global Studies History Justice Studies Criminal Justice Justice and Society Liberal Studies Mathematics Modern Languages Francophone Studies French Latin American Studies Portuguese Studies Program Spanish Philosophy Political Science Political Science/Public Administration Psychology Public Administration Secondary Education Biology Chemistry English General Science History Mathematics Physics Social Studies Sociology Technology Education Applied Teaching Theatre Design/Technical General Theatre Musical Theatre Performance Wellness and Exercise Science Women's Studies World Languages Education French Spanish Portuguese Youth Development	Accounting Biology Business (Management) Chemical Dependency/Addiction Studies Chemistry Biochemistry Professional Chemistry Community and Public Health Promotion Public Health Promotion Health & Aging Women's Health Computer Information Systems Computer Science Early Childhood Education Early Childhood Early Childhood, concentration in Birth to 3 Finance Health Care Administration Health Education Health Sciences Dental Hygiene Human Services Medical Laboratory Sciences Respiratory Therapy Completion Management General Human Resources Operations Marketing Medical Imaging Magnetic Resonance Imaging Nuclear Medicine Technology Radiologic Technology RT Computed Tomography, Medical Imager Management Diagnostic Medical Sonography Radiologic Technology Physical Education Physics Elementary Education Special Education	Studio Art Ceramics Graphic Design Metalsmithing and Jewelry Painting Photography Printmaking Sculpture Digital Media Design Art Education*	Music Music Education Piano Performance Voice Performance String, Woodwind, Brass, Percussion or Guitar Performance	Nursing BSN RN to BSN Program RN to BSN Program Second Degree	Social Work

*Suspended
 NOTE: Bolded text indicates a major while non-bolded text indicates a concentration option within a major
 SOURCE: http://www.ric.edu/academics/Pages/Majors_Programs.aspx

RIC Graduate Program Offerings						
MA	MS	MAT	M Ed	MEd	Mpac	MSW
Biology	Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Art Education	Early Childhood	Music Education	Master of Professional Accountancy	Master of Social Work
English	Health Care Administration	English	Health Education	Music Education	Financial Planning	Master of Social Work
Creative Writing	Operations Management	Mathematics	Teaching English as a Second Language	Advanced Study of Creative Writing		
History		Music Education	Advanced Studies in Teaching & Learning	Advanced Study of Literature		
Juice Studies		Elementary Education	Exceptional Learning Needs	Autism Education		
Mathematical Studies		English	Urban / Multicultural Education	Childhood Trauma		
Psychology		Mathematics	Early Childhood	Financial Planning		
Youth Development		Music Education	Severe / Profound Disabilities	Health Psychology		
		World Languages Education	Special Education Certification	Historical Studies		

SOURCE: <http://www.nc.edu/graduatestudies/Pages/Graduate-Degrees.aspx>

RIC Certificate Program Offerings	
Undergraduate Certificates	Non-degree certificates
Certificate in Social and Human Service Assistance	Clinical Issues in Adoption and Foster Care
Gerontology	Outside Link/ESL English as a Second Language and Computer Assisted English Language Learning
Public History	Green Business
International Non-Governmental Organizations Studies (INGOS)	Training Responsible Adults to be Bookkeeping and Accounting Clerks
Nonprofit Studies	Training Responsible Adults Insurance Technicians
College and Career Attainment	Training Responsible Adults as Medical Assistants
World Languages Education:	
Biology Education	
Chemistry Education	
General Science Education	
Physics Education	

SOURCE: <http://www.nc.edu/continuingeducation/summersession/Pages/certificateprograms.aspx>

URI Undergraduate Degree Offerings

BA	BS	BFA	BLA	BM	BIS
Africana Studies	Accounting	Art	Landscape Architecture	Music	Interdisciplinary Studies
Anthropology	Animal Science and Technology	Art History			
Art and Art History	Aquaculture and Fisheries Science	Theatre			
Biology	Biological Sciences				
Chemistry	Biomedical Engineering				
Chinese	Biotechnology				
Classical Studies	Cell and Molecular Biology				
Communication Studies	Chemical Engineering				
Computer Science	Chemistry				
Criminology and Criminal Justice	Chemistry and Forensic Chemistry				
Data Science	Civil Engineering				
Economics	Communicative Disorders				
Elementary Education	Computer Engineering				
English	Computer Science				
Film/Media	Data Science				
French	Economics				
Gender and Women's Studies	Electrical Engineering				
German	Environmental and Natural Resource Economics				
Global Language and Area Studies	Environmental Science and Management				
History	Finance				
International Studies and Diplomacy Program	General Business Administration				
Italian	Geology and Geological Oceanography				
Journalism	Global Business Management				
Marine Affairs	Health Studies				
Mathematics	Human Development and Family Studies				
Music	Industrial and Systems Engineering				
Philosophy	Innovation and Entrepreneurship				
Political Science	Kinesiology				
Psychology	Management				
Public Relations	Management Information Systems *				
Secondary Education	Marine Affairs				
Sociology	Marine Biology				
Spanish	Marketing				
Sports Media and Communication	Mathematics				
Writing and Rhetoric	Mechanical Engineering				
	Medical Laboratory Science				
	Microbiology *				
	Nursing (4-year B.S.)				
	Nursing (R.N. to B.S.)				
	Nutrition and Dietetics				
	Ocean Engineering				
	Physics				
	Physics and Physical Oceanography				
	Plant Sciences				
	Psychology				
	Secondary Education				
	Sociology *				
	Supply Chain Management				
	Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (SAFS)				
	Textile Marketing				
	Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design				
	Wildlife and Conservation Biology				

*Suspended

SOURCE: <https://web.uri.edu/catalog/degrees-majors-and-fields-of-study/>

URI Graduate Degree Offerings			
MA	MS	PhD	Professional Degrees
Communication Studies	Accounting	Applied Mathematical Sciences *	Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.)
Education	Biological and Environmental Sciences	Biological and Environmental Sciences	Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.)
English	Chemical Engineering	Business Administration	Master of Business Administration (M.B.A)
History	Chemistry	Chemical Engineering	Master of Environmental Science and Management (M.E.S.M.)
International Relations	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Chemistry	Master of Library and Information Studies (M.L.I.S.)
Marine Affairs	Computer Science	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Master of Marine Affairs (M.M.A.)
Spanish*	Dietetics	Computer Science	Master of Music (M.M.)
	Electrical Engineering	Education	Master of Oceanography (M.O.)
	Environmental and Natural Resource Economics	Electrical Engineering	Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) (joint URI-RIC)
	Finance	English	Professional Science Masters in Cyber Security (P.S.M.)
	Human Development and Family Studies	Environmental and Natural Resource Economics	Teacher Certification
	Kinesiology	Industrial and Systems Engineering	
	Labor Relations and Human Resources	Marine Affairs	
	Mathematics	Mathematics	
	Mechanical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering	
	Medical Laboratory Science *	Neuroscience	
	Medical Physics	Nursing	
	Neuroscience	Ocean Engineering	
	Nursing	Oceanography	
	Nutrition	Pharmaceutical Sciences	
	Ocean Engineering	Physics	
	Oceanography	Psychology	
	Pharmaceutical Sciences		
	Physics		
	Psychology *		
	Speech-Language Pathology		
	Statistics		
	Systems Engineering		
	Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design		

*Suspended

SOURCE: <https://web.uri.edu/catalog/graduate-degree-programs/>

URI Certificate Offerings		
Undergraduate Certificate Programs	Graduate Certificate Programs	Post-Master's Certificate Programs
Energy Economics and Policy Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Aquaculture and Fisheries Chemical Engineering (Polymers) Community Planning Cyber Security Digital Forensics and Incident Response Digital Literacy Dyslexia Knowledge and Practice Early Childhood Education Electrical Engineering (VLSI)* Embedded Systems Fashion Merchandising Gender and Women's Studies Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing (GIS/RS) Gerontology and Geriatrics Hydrology Information Literacy Instruction Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Labor Relations and Human Resources Science Writing and Rhetoric Thanatology	Nursing

*Suspended

NOTE: Must be taken as part of a degree program

SOURCE: <https://web.uri.edu/catalog/degrees-majors-and-fields-of-study/>; <https://web.uri.edu/catalog/graduate-degree-programs/>

Appendix B: Northeastern Postsecondary Institution and Student Breakdown

State	Postsecondary Institution Breakdown											
	All Postsecondary Institutions				Public Postsecondary Institutions				Private Postsecondary Institutions			
	Total	Four-Year Institutions	Two-Year Institutions	Total	Four-Year Institutions	Two-Year Institutions	Total	Four-Year Institutions	Two-Year Institutions	Total	Four-Year Institutions	Two-Year Institutions
Connecticut	39	27	12	19	7	12	20	7	12	20	0	
Maine	31	21	10	15	8	7	16	8	7	13	3	
Massachusetts	116	95	21	31	15	16	85	15	16	80	5	
New Hampshire	25	17	8	13	6	7	12	6	7	11	1	
New Jersey	74	51	23	32	13	19	42	13	19	38	4	
New York	299	237	62	81	45	36	218	45	36	192	26	
Pennsylvania	243	162	81	63	46	17	180	46	17	116	64	
Rhode Island	14	13	1	4*	3	1	10	3	1	10	0	
Vermont	21	20	1	5	4	1	16	4	1	16	0	

* Because the Carnegie Classification system treats federal schools as public institutions, this number includes the United States Naval War College
 SOURCE: The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

Postsecondary Student Breakdown

State	All Postsecondary Institutions						Public Postsecondary Institutions						Private Postsecondary Institutions					
	Total	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Four-Year Undergraduate Students	Two-Year Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Four-Year Undergraduate Students	Two-Year Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Four-Year Undergraduate Students	Two-Year Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students		
Connecticut	198,578	161,612	36,966	112,232	49,380	13,793	103,341	53,961	49,380	13,793	58,271	18,853	18,853	58,271	0	23,173		
Maine	71,811	61,919	9,892	44,470	17,449	3,933	43,066	26,107	16,959	3,933	18,853	18,853	18,853	18,363	490	5,959		
Massachusetts	503,508	362,741	140,767	273,811	88,930	27,320	186,069	98,450	87,619	27,320	176,672	176,672	176,672	175,361	1,311	113,447		
New Hampshire	149,199	119,473	29,726	106,897	12,576	3,880	35,881	23,428	12,453	3,880	83,592	83,592	83,592	83,469	123	25,846		
New Jersey	419,783	356,414	63,369	204,887	151,527	37,999	296,598	149,736	146,862	37,999	59,816	59,816	59,816	55,151	4,665	59,816		
New York	1,202,821	986,297	216,524	683,402	302,895	67,930	628,393	338,507	289,886	67,930	357,904	357,904	357,904	344,895	13,009	148,594		
Pennsylvania	724,737	583,596	141,141	441,027	142,569	49,866	351,077	227,702	123,375	49,866	232,519	232,519	232,519	213,325	19,194	91,275		
Rhode Island	82,901	71,536	11,365	56,643	14,893	4,076	36,942	22,184	14,758	4,076	34,594	34,594	34,594	34,459	135	7,289		
Vermont	41,156	34,783	6,373	29,279	5,504	2,293	20,308	14,804	5,504	2,293	14,475	14,475	14,475	14,475	0	4,080		

SOURCE: NCES, IPEDS data, 2017