

**The Role of Selection, Orientation, and Training in
Improving the Quality of Public College and University
Boards of Trustees in the United States**

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Spring 2001



Educational Policy Institute of Virginia Tech

Policy Paper Number 8

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“Every college or university (or system) is linked to the larger society through a governing board of trustees or regents. This board, unique to this country in its powers and characteristics, has broad responsibility for the activities of the institution it governs. It is ordinarily made up of lay people, in public institutions named by the governor or state legislature or elected by the people” (Trow, 1998, p. 29).

In the opinion of trustees, political leaders, and educational leaders there are inadequacies in current appointment and training processes (AGB, 1999). Political and education leaders also indicate that, in some instances, officials fail to articulate clear expectations for qualifications and performance to incoming trustees (AGB, 1999). This may also lead to decreased effectiveness of boards. To date, there has been a modest amount of research on the subject of college and university trustees. Many of the major studies on trusteeship are dated, and most of the current literature is prescriptive rather than empirical (Michael, Schwartz, & Hamilton, 1997).

Beginning in the late 1980s there was an increased interest in the effectiveness of individual trustees and of boards as a whole. The underlying assumption for this study was that board quality or effectiveness is dependant on the constitution of the board, which, in turn, is dependant on the process of selection as well as the training and orientation activities available to trustees. Figure 1 provides a conceptual framework to illustrate the main variables of importance in this study. This framework was outlined by Michael et al. (1997) in a study of trustee selection and orientation in Ohio.

The Model

In this model, criteria used in selecting trustees depend on the roles played by key actors (e.g. governors, presidents, and State Higher Education Executive Officers) in the

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selection/appointment process. The orientation and training activities reflect the criteria established for the initial selection of trustees as well as the indicators of effectiveness emphasized by the board. The selection criteria, along with the type of orientation available, ultimately determine the effectiveness of the board.

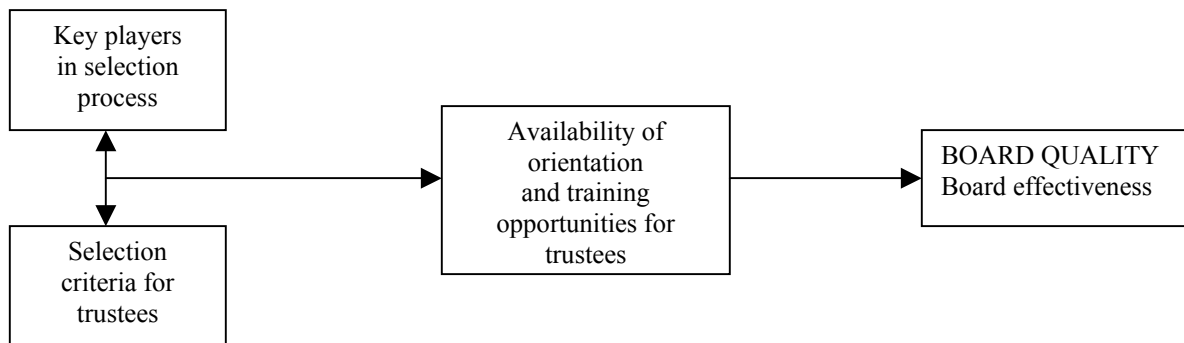


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for the relationship between trustee appointment/selection and training (Adapted from Michael, Schwartz, & Hamilton, 1997).

Key Players in the Selection Process

In 47 of the 50 states, governors appoint all or a portion of public college and university trustees (Janosik & Dika, 2000). In Minnesota, Nevada, and South Carolina, trustees are elected by the General Assembly. Although most researchers agree that systems for appointing public college and university governing boards are preferable to elections, there are problems with appointment systems as well (Rose, 1993).

The appointment of trustees in public institutions has been described as a fight over the ‘three p’s’: prestige, politics, and power. Appointment to the university board may be among the most prestigious appointments a governor has to offer his/her loyal supporters. (Kohn & Mortimer, 1983, p. 32)

In the cases where the state governor appoints trustees, the influence of groups in making recommendations for appointments is of interest for identifying key actors other than the governor.

The influence of different groups in making recommendations for appointments has been studied by examining the perceptions of recommending groups and trustees. Recommending groups include the state-level higher education board, presidents, other trustees, alumni, and administrators. In Rose’s (1993) study of the trustee selection process for public four-year institutions in Virginia, 57 percent of presidents, 52 percent of alumni, 44 percent of current trustees, and 63 percent of administrators said they had a “great deal of influence” or “some influence” in making recommendations for trustee appointments. This suggests a relatively high-perceived degree of influence, although a significant proportion of each of these groups (over 20%) indicated that they had “little influence” or “no influence.”

Rose (1993) also interviewed governors' constituents to determine the roles of state executive staff in the trustee selection process. Secretaries of Education, Secretaries of the Commonwealth, cabinet secretaries, alumni associations, and legislators were identified as influential persons in the selection process.

Michael et al. (1997) investigated Ohio trustees' perceptions of the reasons for their selection. For public university sector trustees, the role of the governor was described as most important, followed by the leadership of the institution and the other trustees. The influence of the president and the State Board of Regents were perceived to be unimportant.

There is insufficient evidence to make any conclusions about the influence of recommending groups. This small body of literature is restricted to single state studies. In addition, the literature is almost exclusively based on the perceptions of trustees and recommending groups rather than from those who receive the recommendations and make the appointments.

Selection Criteria

While a great deal of the literature on selection criteria is opinion-based (e.g. Association of Governing Boards (AGB), 1981), there have been a few studies that have attempted to determine overt and covert criteria used in making appointments. In Rose's (1993) study of Virginia's selection process, institutional representatives were asked which criteria were used for selection and which criteria should have been used for selection from a list of 28 criteria. Institutional representatives included alumni, trustees, presidents, administrators, and faculty. Overall, the top five criteria selected by respondents included: (a) political relationship with influential state officials (80.5%); (b) demonstrated leadership skills (75.7%); (c) personal integrity (68.6%); (d) minority status of individuals (66.2%); and (e) alumni status (63.8%).

When institutional respondents were asked which criteria should have been used, the results were different. The top five most cited criteria were: (a) demonstrated leadership skills (76.7%); (b) ability to contribute to and support the mission, direction and needs of the institution (74.1%); (c) commitment to the institution (73.6%); (d) personal integrity (70.6%); and (e) knowledge of higher education/familiarity with problems of higher education (68.2%). In sum, those criteria that could be associated with Kohn and Mortimer's (1983) 'three p's' were recognized as influential, but not favored for ideal selection practices.

Rose (1993) also asked state executive constituents about criteria used in the selection process. The two state agency executives closest to the appointment process in Virginia agreed on 18 of 28 criteria that were influential in the appointment process. All criteria identified by the institutional group were included in the list. Notably, while 58.8% of institutional constituents indicated that "previous financial contributions to political campaigns or political parties" was a criterion used for selection, neither state executive representative mentioned this criterion as influential.

Ohio trustees indicated perceived reasons for their selection from a list of seven criteria (Michael et al., 1997). Public university sector trustees rated their personal leadership

qualities, political affiliation, and success in the business world as the most important reasons for their selection. Trustees also considered their educational background, administrative background, and personal economic status to be somewhat important in their appointment.

While the literature contains some information about trustees' and institutional representatives' perceptions of selection criteria, information on criteria used by governors' offices is lacking. Those involved with the appointment process may be reluctant to share their criteria for appointment, resulting in non-response as in Rose's (1993) study, or in politically desirable responses.

Orientation and Training Opportunities

While there is near universal agreement on the necessity of training and orientation, very few studies have looked at the availability and effectiveness of training opportunities for trustees. Davis (1997) studied trustee education programs at community colleges. Only 14% of colleges required trustees to participate in an orientation program, while 70% offered a voluntary program. Most often, college presidents and staff provided the orientation. The most common topic was budget and financial management, followed by trustee roles and responsibilities, board-president relations, goal setting, policy development, and ethics.

Ohio public sector trustees were asked about the importance of five sources of orientation and training (Michael et al., 1997). Trustees identified their past professional experiences as the most important, followed by other board members, their educational background, and the institutional orientation program. In the Ohio study, the State Board of Regents was not considered to be an important source of education.

Information on current orientation and training practices at public four-year institutions is difficult to find in the literature. While this information may be gathered at the state level, it is either unpublished or inaccessible. This information is necessary to examine relationships between appointments, training, and board effectiveness.

Board Effectiveness

Chait, Holland, and Taylor (1991) were among the first researchers to study the actual practices of effective governing boards rather than simply prescribe what boards should do. Although their study focused on private sector boards, the resultant model of board effectiveness has been considered to be an appropriate one for public boards as well. The researchers made site visits to 22 campuses, conducted interviews with more than 110 trustees and college presidents, and collected over 400 self-assessment surveys from board members (Chait, Holland, & Taylor, 1996). Three major findings were revealed: (a) Specific characteristics and behaviors distinguish strong and weak boards; (b) There is a positive and systematic association between the board's performance and that of the institution; and (c) Self-assessment of boards has questionable validity as an accurate and objective measure of performance (Myers, 1997). Chait et al. (1996) identified six distinct competencies of demonstrably effective boards of trustees: (a) contextual – the ability to take culture and norms of institution into account; (b) educational – one's knowledge about the institution, profession, and board's responsibilities, roles, and performance; (c) interpersonal – the ability

to work as a group, attend to the board's collective welfare, and fosters cohesiveness; (d) analytical – the ability to recognize complexities and subtleties of issues and accepts ambiguity and uncertainty; (e) political – the ability to accept the primary responsibility to develop and maintain healthy relationships among major constituents; and (f) strategic – the ability to envision a direction and shape a strategy (Chait et al., 1996). Of particular interest in this study is the educational dimension.

The educational process in private institutions with effective governing boards was characterized by consciously created opportunities for education and development, where constant feedback and self-reflection were integrated to diagnose strengths and limitations, and to examine mistakes. Although the authors did not suggest that their work would apply to public boards, the relevance of these competencies should not be diminished.

Myers (1997) used the Chait et al. model to study the effectiveness of multi-campus system boards. Using the same interview technique as in the Chait study, Myers found that effective multi-campus boards were characterized primarily by competencies in the political, strategic, and analytical dimensions. In terms of the educational dimension, boards indicated they had some fear of public discussion and open self-education, especially when they had experienced extensive public criticism. All boards cited the importance of a quality system administration to keep the board well informed about the issues, the system, and the institutions.

Summary of Previous Research

Selection, training, and effectiveness of boards of trustees have generally been studied through the perceptions of those who are not directly responsible for trustee appointment and education. Key actors in the selection process are from the political sector and the institutional sector, including alumni. Personal leadership qualities and political affiliations have been used as primary selection criteria. While orientation and training are assumed to be important for board effectiveness, Ohio trustees emphasized their own professional experience as more important than training provided by the institution. Finally, research on effective private boards has found education to be an important dimension, while one national study on public boards found that education is not emphasized in the same way for political reasons.

Overall, the research on selection, training, and effectiveness of public higher education governing boards is limited. As mentioned before, most of the literature is prescriptive and presented by a few prolific authors, often connected with the Association for Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. Studies are usually limited to a single state. Consequently, there is a gap in understanding about actual practices in the selection and training of trustees. In addition, little is known about appointment and training processes from the point of view of those directly involved in administering these processes. The current study was designed to address this gap in the literature by seeking answers to the following questions:

1. Which key players most influence the appointment decisions made by governors?
2. What specific qualifications for public college and university trustees appear in state statutes?

3. What importance do governors give to selected personal attributes when making appointments to college and university boards?
4. What other qualifications do governors consider when making their appointments?
5. Where state level orientation programs exist, what are their principle characteristics?
6. Where state level training programs exist, what are their principle characteristics?
7. How effective do governors perceive their appointments to be?
8. To what do governors attribute board effectiveness?

Method

Sample

The sampling frame for this study was a list of 50 State Higher Education Officers (SHEEO) and 50 state governors. Responses were received from 41 SHEEO and 24 governor's offices, for response rates of 82.0% and 48.0% respectively. Within these responses, all 50 states were represented.

Instruments

With the intent to obtain information from all 50 states about formal guidelines and actual practices in the appointment and training of appointed academic board of trustees, a survey research design was used. Two instruments, one for SHEEO and one for governor's offices were designed based on a review of the extant literature. Several faculty members with expertise in higher education governance and policy, a former Secretary of Education, and two members of a state higher education coordinating body reviewed the questionnaires for content validity. Their comments were used to revise the questionnaires. The questionnaire for SHEEO officers consisted of 26 items focused on gubernatorial appointment and state-level orientation and training processes. The questionnaire for governors was slightly longer at 30 questions, and included sub-questions on the nature of training and orientation programs.

Procedures

Questionnaires were mailed to SHEEO officers and governors. Two weeks later, a follow-up reminder was sent to all potential participants. Approximately one month after the reminder, letters and a second questionnaire were sent to all SHEEO and governors who had not yet responded. Finally, one month after the third mailing, any remaining non-respondents, were contacted by phone.

For the most part, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data. Open-ended responses on the questionnaires were summarized and grouped into categories for ease of analysis and presentation.

Findings

Once the data were collected, reliability coefficients were calculated to determine the sufficiency of the instruments used. The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the 21 common closed-ended items for the governor's and SHEEO executive officer's questionnaires were .81

and .62 respectively. A higher percentage of no responses in the SHEEO executive officers' data set may have lowered the alpha coefficient for their questionnaire.

Key Players

The governors who responded to the questionnaire indicated that the recommendations and information given by legislators, immediate staff, cabinet members, and other trustees were important or very important in helping them identify potential appointees. The recommendations on college and university presidents, state higher education executive officers, and campaign staff were reported as being less influential. The data concerning the importance of these key actors are found in Table 1.

Table 1
The Influence of Key Players on Gubernatorial Appointees (n=24)

Recommending Group	Percent Ranked as Important or Very Important (Rank Order)
Legislators	80 (1)
Immediate staff members	75 (2)
Cabinet members	71 (3)
Other trustees	71 (3)
College and university presidents	58 (5)
State higher education executive officer	58 (5)
Campaign staff	21 (7)

Selection Criteria

Governors in 47 of 50 states appoint at least a majority of their public college and university. This study revealed that 11 states have provided some guidance in their state statutes to help with this process.

The majority of these selection criteria address demographic qualifications such as place of residence, voter eligibility, or a balance of political party affiliation, or occupation. Two statutorily mandated selection criteria address the personal skill set of the appointee -- experience related to mission (Oregon) and ability to serve without bias (Idaho). A complete list of qualifications found in state codes appears in Table 2.

Personal Attributes

To gain a better understanding of the appointment process, the researchers asked governors to indicate the importance of selected personal attributes when making such decisions. These attributes were identified by Kohn and Mortimer (1983).

Table 2
Qualifications for Trustee Appointment Found in State Statutes (N=24)

Qualification	State *
Residency / Citizenship	AR, ID, IN, KS, OK, OR
Geographic representation (county, district)	AL, HI, TX
Qualified voter	AR, TX
Political party representation (balance)	IA, NH
Occupational representation (balance)	OK, NH
Experience related to mission	OR
Ability to serve without bias (e.g., occupation, religion, locality, political party)	ID

* States identified by standard abbreviation.

Governors who responded to the questionnaire indicated that personal leadership qualities, educational background, and demonstrated success in the business world were the most highly valued personal attributes of those listed. Party affiliation, political ideology, and personal wealth were reported as less important. These data are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
Importance of Selected Personal Attributes Considered by Governors (N=24)

Attribute	Percent Ranked as Important or Very Important (Rank Order)
Personal leadership qualities	96 (1)
Educational background	83 (2)
Success in the business world	70 (3)
Administrative background	61 (4)
Success in academia	39 (5)
Party Affiliation	35 (6)
Political ideology	35 (6)
Personal wealth	5 (8)

Other Important Qualifications

To ensure that governors were not constrained by a finite list of personal attributes, governors were asked to respond to an open-ended question that gave them the opportunity to identify other qualifications important to them in the appointing process. Seven governors (29% of the respondents) provided additional information. Demonstrated leadership in one's profession or in business, demonstrated leadership in one's community, interest in or experience with higher education, and the ability to represent the institution's constituents were listed most frequently. A complete list of responses can be found in Table 4.

Table 4
Response to an Open-Ended Questions About the Qualifications Identified and Used by Governors (N=7)

Item	Times Mentioned
Business/professional leadership success	3
Community leadership	3
Interest in or experience with higher education	3
Ability to represent service groups / constituents	3
Prior board or governance experience	2
Ability to be fiscally responsible and accountable	2
Professional experience	1
Understanding of education policy	1
Understanding of budgeting processes	1
Agreeing with governor's educational philosophy	1
Personal integrity	1
Administrative skills	1
Educational attainment	1

Orientation Opportunities

Of the 24 governors who responded, 14 indicated that statewide orientation programs were provided for trustees. Of these 14 states, two included stipulations about the orientation program in their state statutes. Only one state required trustee attendance at its orientation program. SHEEO executive officers in 19 other states indicated that this type of activity was provided. Given the two data sets, a total of 33 (66%) states reported having orientation programs.

Two primary agencies assumed responsibility for these programs: the governors' offices and the system or SHEEO office. These orientation meetings are most likely to include topics on: the role and responsibilities of trustees, a review of state statutes regarding sunshine, public meeting, and conflict of interest laws, budget and finance, the legislative

process, and press relations. A complete matrix of the information provided from governors about their orientation programs for public college and university trustees can be found in Table 5.

Ongoing Training Opportunities

Nine of the 24 governors reported the existence of statewide, ongoing training opportunities in their states. Another twelve programs were reported by SHEEO executive officers. Given these data, 21 (42%) states report having ongoing training programs for their trustees.

Two primary agencies assumed responsibility for these programs: the governors' offices and the system or SHEEO office. These training programs are most likely to include topics on governance issues, academic programs, budget and finance, and discussions on timely issues. A complete matrix of the information provided from governors about their training programs for public college and university trustees can be found in Table 6.

Effectiveness of College and University Boards

Seventeen of 24 (77%) governors indicated that the process of selecting trustees received a high priority in their administrations and none of the respondents implied that appointments are given low priority. When asked whether appointments met their stated goals of appointments, 87% of governors indicated that all or most of their goals were met. None of the respondents indicated that none of their goals had been met. Governors attributed the success of their boards to three primary factors when asked to respond to a selected list of factors. The quality of the individual identified to serve was ranked as the most important factor leading to board success. The quality of the state orientation program and the guidance given by the governor's office also ranked high in importance. The importance of the complete list of factors can be found in Table 7.

Discussion and Recommendations

This study looked at formal guidelines and actual practices in the selection, orientation, and training of public college and university trustees. Three components of the process based on a conceptual framework proposed by Michael et al. (1997) were examined. These were: (a) key players in the selection process, (b) formal and informal selection criteria for trustees, and (c) the availability of orientation and training opportunities for trustees. Governors' perceptions of the effectiveness of the appointments in meeting his or her higher education goals were used to approximate board effectiveness, the fourth component of Michael et al.'s model. Recommendations about key players, selection criteria, orientation opportunities, training opportunities, and future research can be made based on the results of this study on the selection and training process of public college and university trustees.

Table 5
Characteristics of State-Level Orientation Programs for College and University Trustees

State	Statutory Provision	Mandatory Program	Responsible Agency	Focus
Hawaii	No	No	Governor's Office	Sunshine laws, uniform information practices, ethics, agency rule making, legal issues
Idaho	No	No	SHEEO Staff	Not provided
Illinois	No	No	Governor's Office Legislators	Not provided
Iowa	No	No	Governor's Office SHEEO Office	Administration agenda, role of board members, legislative process, ethics, board powers and duties, status of programs, budget and personnel issues
Maine	No	No	System Office	Overview of current issues, budget, facilities, personnel Policies
Mississippi	No	No	Commissioner	Not provided
Missouri	No	No	SHEEO Office	Meeting procedures, governance and budget issues
Pennsylvania	No	No	SHEEO Office	Academic programs, contract and policy issues
Rhode island	No	No	Board Office	Board responsibilities

Table 5 (con't)

Characteristics of State-Level Orientation Programs for College and University Trustees

State	Statutory Provision	Mandatory Program	Responsible Agency	Focus
South Dakota	No	No	System Office	Current issues, organizational structures, policy making processes, policy and procedures
Texas	Yes	Yes	Governor's Office	Fiscal responsibility, ethics, open meeting and records laws, press relations
Utah	No	No	Commissioner	Not provided
Virginia	Yes	No	SHEEO Office	Roles, duties, and responsibilities of trustees, budget and finance, public meeting laws, press relations
Wyoming	No	No	Governor's Office	Budget, board functions, academic and personnel issues

Note: SHEEO respondents in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin indicated the existence of statewide orientation programs. Governors did not provide additional information.

Table 6
Characteristics of State-Level Training Programs for College and University Trustees

State	Statutory Provision	Mandatory Program	Responsible Agency	Focus
Illinois	No	No	Governor's Office and Legislators	Roles and functions of trustees
Maryland	No	No	SHEEO Office	Governance, funding, accountability, new academic programs, and current issues.
Mississippi	No	No	Commissioner	Not provided
Pennsylvania	No	No	Governor's Office	Ethics, issues related to governance
Rhode Island	No	No	SHEEO Office	Board responsibilities
South Dakota	No	No	SHEEO Office	Not provided
Utah	No	No	Commissioner	Not provided
Virginia	Yes	No	SHEEO Office	General and timely issues
Wyoming	No	No	Governor's Office	Budget, board functions, academic and personnel issues

Note: SHEEO respondents indicated the existence of statewide training programs in Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin. Governors did not provide additional information.

Table 7
Importance of Selected Factors in Board Effectiveness (N=24)

Factor	Percent Ranked as Important or Very Important
Quality of trustee appointed	100 (1)
Quality of state orientation program	79 (2)
Quality of guidance given by governor's office	73 (3)
Quality of training given by institution	70 (4)
Quality of state training program	58 (5)

Key Players

The previous research on key players is based mainly on the perceptions of trustees and recommending groups. Some authors suggest that governors are pressured to use board appointments to reward individuals and organizations for political support (Callan & Honetschlager, 1992) but in this study, campaign staff had the least influence on the selection of trustees. Legislators were the leading key players, as they were identified as being important or very important by 80% of governors. **To decrease public skepticism about trustee appointments and improve the quality of the recruiting and screening processes, governors may want to more formally recognize the value placed on the recommendations made by legislators by instituting a joint legislative advisory board to assist with the appointment process.**

Selection Criteria

Less than half of states have codified criteria for trustee appointment. The selection of trustees is based on the preferences of the governor rather than on formal criteria. Most previous studies have described trustees' and institutional representatives' perceptions of selection criteria. In this study, governors had consensus on three main skill set areas as a result of rating personal attributes of trustees and identifying informal qualifications used to make appointments: (a) personal leadership qualities (business and community), (b) educational background or interest in education, and (c) success in the business world. All governors in the study rated the quality of the trustee as important or very important in meeting the goals of trustee appointments. Consistent selection criteria (quality inputs) play a significant role in ensuring board effectiveness (quality outputs).

To improve the quality of the appointment process, three selection criteria for public college and university trustees: (a) personal leadership qualities (business and community), (b) educational background or interest in education, and (c) success in the business world; should be added in a consistent manner to state codes. A short description

of each criterion should be included to provide more explicit selection guidelines for those involved in the recruitment and selection process.

Orientation Opportunities

Studies on the availability and effectiveness of training are notably absent in the literature on public college and university trustees. In the present study, governors identified the quality of the state orientation program as a very important factor in meeting their higher education goals, second only to quality of the trustee. Despite this professed degree of importance, orientation programs are voluntary in all but one state. **To ensure a consistent base of knowledge, a formal orientation program for new trustees should be mandatory, and should be provided by the state-level education agency.**

Orientation topics should be specific to operation of higher education boards and to the institution served. The most common topics in orientation programs are the role and responsibilities of trustees, a review of state statutes regarding sunshine, public meeting, and conflict of interest laws, budget and finance issues, the legislative process, and press relations. Orientation to budget and fiscal issues should be provided on an as-needed basis.

Training Opportunities

Governors identified training provided by institutions as more important than training provided by state agencies in meeting their higher education goals. In states that do provide training opportunities, these opportunities are voluntary. This is understandable given that many trustees are professionals with high time demands. Requiring trustees to attend an additional set of mandatory meetings beyond the time commitment given to the board itself may not be realistic. The opportunity to improve one's skill set relative to the higher education enterprise should not be ignored, however. **Individual institutions should provide on-going training opportunities. Training opportunities should be designed keeping the time demands of trustees in mind.**

In many states, the state-level higher education agency is responsible for training opportunities. These agencies are in the best position to collect data and monitor training at public institutions. Accordingly, individual institutions should be required to develop and submit training program plans to this central agency. **The state-level agency should be charged with the responsibility of identifying best practices for training, monitoring the training programs, and collecting data on training practices. This information should be shared with college presidents and rectors of the boards.** A central training web site might also be developed to facilitate a degree of standardized trustee training across the public boards. Online training modules would be one method to allow trustees to study on their own time and at their own pace. Training programs most often include topics on governance issues, academic programs, budget and finance, personnel and other current issues.

Future Research

This study sought information on the role of selection, orientation, and training for improving the quality of public college and university trustees. While previous work in this

area is prescriptive and based largely on perceptions of trustees and institutional representatives, this study chronicles the actual practices of governors. The study provided valuable information about key players and selection criteria used by governors, as well as a snapshot of current orientation and training opportunities across the states. Information on board effectiveness was inferred from governors' perceptions of the effectiveness of appointments and their attributions of this effectiveness. Future studies should include questions about the competencies of effective boards identified by Chait et al. (1996).

This study also identified current practices and consensus among governors, specifically in the selection of public college and university trustees. A future study could determine whether there is support for the recommendations made by the researchers, which were largely based on points of consensus among the governors who participated in this study. Potential participants in the study would include governors, State Higher Education Executive Officers, and institutional representatives, as these three groups are identified within the recommendations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study fills in some of the gaps in the literature on selection, orientation, and training of public college and university trustees. Information on formal guidelines and actual practices facilitates the understanding of these processes beyond the perceptions of peripheral actors. This study presents a national picture of selection, orientation, and training processes, which is significantly larger in scope than previous single state studies. As researchers begin to have a better understanding of these practices across states, those interested in higher education governance will be better able to design best practices that ensure board quality and effective systems of higher education.

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Educational Policy Institute of Virginia Tech
<http://filebox.vt.edu/chre/elps/EPI/index.htm>

Perspectives on Higher Education Policy in Virginia
<http://filebox.vt.edu/chre/elps/EPI/Perspectives/index.htm>

A Progress Report on the of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education
<http://filebox.vt.edu/chre/elps/EPI/BRCProgress/index.htm>

The Virginia Business Higher Education Council
<http://filebox.vt.edu/chre/elps/EPI/VBHEC/index.htm>



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