

e*pi* Research Brief

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Selecting and Training Public College and University Trustees

This report is the third in a series of research briefs issued by the Educational Policy Institute (EPI) of Virginia Tech. The Institute is an interdisciplinary group of faculty sharing a common interest in education policy in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The mission of EPI is to: (a) establish an organization devoted to educational policy research and service in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation, (b) conduct research intended to inform educational policy makers, (c) focus research interests of the faculty and graduate students on educational policy issues, and (d) act as a service unit for educational policy groups such as the State Board of Education and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

University governance is a topic of increasing conversation among policy makers. Writers in the popular press suggest that if higher education is to be held more accountable, then board of trustee members should be more actively involved in overseeing and directing their institutions. Some have called into question the criteria by which these individuals are selected. Others have suggested that if trustees are to be more actively involved, they should receive training to help trustees acquire the skill set necessary to ensure their success. This policy brief, written by Steve Janosik and Sandra Dika, reports on the results of a nationwide survey to assess the current selection and training processes in all 50 states.

A more comprehensive report will be available shortly. Check the EPI home page for its release. The URL is <<http://fbox.vt.edu:10021/chre/elps/EPI/index.htm>>. I hope you find this information to be of interest.

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VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to characterize formal guidelines and actual practices in the appointment and training of appointed academic boards of trustees. The study consisted of a national survey of governors and state higher education officers associated with the appointment and training processes of academic trustees at public higher education institutions. This policy brief summarizes the results of the survey of state higher education officers.

The questionnaire consisted of 25 items that focused on gubernatorial appointment and state-level training processes. State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) were contacted by mail and by telephone. Of the 50 officers contacted, 41 (82.0%) responded to the survey. Information for the remaining 9 states was obtained from either the president's office of the flagship institution in that state or the state higher education system administration.

- Gubernatorial Appointments - In 47 of the 50 states (94.0%), governors appoint all or a portion of public college and university trustees. In Minnesota, Nevada, and South Carolina, trustees are elected by the General Assembly. In Nebraska, the trustees for the University of Nebraska are elected, but the trustees for Nebraska State Colleges are appointed.
- Qualifications for Appointments in State Code - Nineteen states (38.0%) reported that the qualifications for trustee appointment formally appear in state statute or regulation. The most common qualifications are related to residency, geographical or regional representation, and party affiliation. Connecticut includes racial and ethnic diversity in its qualifications, and Mississippi specifies that appointees will be "of the highest order of character, intelligence, learning, and fitness for performance of such duties."
- State-Level Provision of Orientation and Training - New trustee members are offered the opportunity to attend a state-level orientation program in 38 states (76.0%). The most common program topics are administration, board members' roles and duties, current policy issues, and budget or fiscal issues.

Opportunities to attend state-level ongoing training programs are offered in 20 states (40.0%). Included topics were similar to those presented in the orientation sessions. Training is sometimes facilitated by outside groups, notably the Association of Governing Boards (AGB). Two states mentioned regular training sessions for trustees: North Carolina has a conference on trusteeship every two years and Virginia offers non-mandatory training sessions one or more times each year.

- Executive and Legislative Branch Changes - Changes in training processes are planned by the Executive branches in three states. In Rhode Island and Missouri, there are proposals to increase orientation and training activities. In Virginia, the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission recently made a recommendation to make training mandatory during the first year of an appointee's term. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) would be charged with developing a series of programs.

State-by-state results for the above areas appear on the next page. A more comprehensive report will be available shortly.

Selection and Training Processes as Reported by State Higher Education Executive Officers

State	Gub. Appts. ³	Quals. in Code	State Orientation	State Training	Exec. Branch Change	Leg. Branch Change
Alabama	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Alaska ²	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Arizona	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Arkansas	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
California	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Colorado	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Connecticut	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Delaware	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Florida	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Georgia	yes	no	yes	no	n/a	no
Hawaii	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Idaho	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Illinois	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Indiana	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Iowa	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Kansas	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Kentucky	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Louisiana	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Maine ¹	yes	no	yes	yes	n/a	n/a
Maryland	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Massachusetts	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Michigan	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Minnesota ¹	no	no	yes	no	n/a	n/a
Missouri	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
Mississippi	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Montana	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Nebraska ¹	yes	no	no	no	n/a	n/a
Nevada	no	no	no	no	no	no
New Hampshire	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
New Jersey	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
New Mexico	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
New York – CUNY ¹	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
North Carolina ¹	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
North Dakota	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Ohio	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Oklahoma	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Oregon	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Pennsylvania ¹	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Rhode Island	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
South Carolina	yes	no	no	no	no	no
South Dakota	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Tennessee ¹	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Texas	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a
Utah	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Vermont	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Virginia	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Washington ¹	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
West Virginia	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Wisconsin	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Wyoming	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no

¹ Information obtained from flagship institution or state system.

³ Governor appoints all or some of the trustees.

² Information obtained from Governor’s office.

n/a - Not Available.

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