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May, 2016

Executive Summary: Typology of State- Level Community College Governance Structures

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an analysis and evaluation about state-level community college governance structures of the 50 American States. There is a limited amount of research that has been done on state-level community college governance structures, and therefore additional and more comprehensive research on how the 50 American States structure their state-level governance of community colleges was needed. Additionally, an update on state-level community college governance structures for the 50 American States is beneficial for community college governance leaders across the country to not only stay current and informed on changes and trends, but to also have a better understanding about other states' power-structures, governance, and administration over community colleges. Based on a questionnaire sent to the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges members, it was found that because of various factors, changes, and emerging issues; taxonomies in literature were fast becoming out-of-date, and less precise. Katsinas' taxonomy (1996) was chosen to structure this survey, and a 2015 update is included in the findings section of this executive summary.

The following questions were developed to respond to this study's purpose

1. How do state systems differ in the design of their state-level community college governance structures?
2. What factors are driving change in the state-level governance of community colleges?

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

This explorative case-study research utilizes two research methods. The following information is produced by method of document analysis from a selection of resources about state-level community college governance structures & a mixed-method survey (Friedel, Killacky, and Katsinas, 2014; NCHEMS, 2015). From these resources, state community college directors contributed explorative summaries describing their state-level community college governance structures. Documents that may be used for systematic evaluation as part of a study can take a variety of forms and may include: agendas, meeting minutes, manuals, background papers, books and brochures, letters and memoranda, newspapers, press releases, program proposals, summaries, organizational/institutional reports, survey data, and various public records (Bowen, 2009). Furthermore, document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative/quantitative research methods as a means of triangulation – the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Bowen, 2009).

A survey was first distributed and collected by Jeremy Varner (gatekeeper) at the annual National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges (NCSDDC) meeting on July 26 – 29, 2015. The NCSDDC is an affiliated council of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and provides a forum for the exchange of information about development, trends, and problems in state systems of community colleges (NCSDDC, 2015). See http://www.statedirectors.org/copy_of_statedirectors/directors/ncsdcc.htm for an official list of

members. As a follow up for those who were not able to attend, an email with a link to the survey (adapted to Qualtrics) was sent to the NCSDDC email list.

This survey was created in-part by Dr. Janice Nahra-Friedel, and incorporates ten questions ($n = 10$), with a few open-ended questions that allowed the opportunity for themes and trends related to state-level community college governance to emerge. State directors were surveyed because of their knowledge, experience, and perspectives regarding state-level governance and other issues in the larger context of a rapidly change state policy environment. Responses were received from $N = 45$ NCSDDC members (or their designees). It is a purposive sample, and survey data is triangulated with other resources via means of document analysis.

The following questions were asked in the survey: Questions one, two, six, nine, and ten were open ended with no character/word limit. Question four allowed the respondent to have multiple answers. Question one's possible responses were adapted from the Katsinas (1996) taxonomy. All results and tables were compiled using Iowa State University Qualtrics licensed software.

1. Which of the following categories best describes your state-level community college governance structure?
 - a. "Coordinating/governing board" for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities
 - b. Same "coordinating/governing board" as K-12, but separate from Universities
 - c. Same "coordinating/governing" board as Universities
 - d. Coordination for community college governance falls beneath a University "coordinating/governing" board
 - e. No state-level "coordinating or governing" board

2. Using your response for question #1, what are the primary responsibilities of your state's community college governing/coordinating board? (Please select all that apply)
 - a. Establish policies and approves actions related to faculty and personnel
 - b. Hire, evaluate, and terminate CEO
 - c. Ensure fiscal integrity
 - d. Academic program review and approval
 - e. State-wide planning, i.e., strategic plan, facilities, technology plans
 - f. State-wide policy leadership
 - g. Defines mission for the state's higher education system
 - h. Defines its mission of each higher education sector
 - i. Formulates legislative agenda
 - j. Other decision-making authority (please specify):

3. In practice, what body coordinates the collective action of the state's community colleges? I.e. lobbying, advocacy, development of legislative agenda
 - a. State governing board
 - b. State coordinating council
 - c. Association of community college presidents
 - d. Association of community college trustees
 - e. Combination of any of the above
 - f. Other, please specify

4. What types of factors have driven change for your state's community college governance structure?

5. How much authority does your state-level community college coordinating/governing board have?
 - a. A great deal
 - b. Some
 - c. A little
 - d. None

6. Within the past 5-years, has your state conducted a higher education/community college governance study?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. How might we obtain a copy of the report
 - d. If yes, who provided the leadership of the study?

7. Has your state made a serious attempt to change its community college governance structure in recent years? Which way is it going?

FINDINGS

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS RESULTS

The results of document analysis categorize the 50 American States utilizing the Katsinas (1996) taxonomy. One table describes the national landscape in 1996, and another table depicts the national landscape in 2014.

Typology of the United States (1996). Studying the table below, we see that in 1996, at the high-end, $n = 20$ states used the “rational” model as their structure for state-level community college governance. At the lower-end, $n = 4$ states’ community college governance was structured using a *same coordinating board as K-12 (but separate from universities)*, and another $n = 4$ states were listed as having *no state coordinating body* to govern their community colleges.

State-Level Community College Governance Structures (1996)

<u>Coordinating board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities (20 states)</u>	<u>Community colleges same coordinating board as K-12, separate from Universities (4 states)</u>	<u>Community colleges same coordinating board as Universities (15 states)</u>	<u>Coordination for community colleges under a university governing board (7 states)</u>	<u>No state coordinating board (4 states)</u>
Arizona	Alabama	Arkansas	Alaska	Maryland
California	Kansas	Idaho	Georgia	New Jersey
Colorado	Michigan	Louisiana	Hawaii	Pennsylvania
Connecticut	Iowa	Missouri	Kentucky	Wisconsin
Delaware		Montana	Maine	
Florida		Nebraska	Minnesota	
Illinois		Nevada	New York	
Indiana		New Mexico		
Massachusetts		North Dakota		
Mississippi		Ohio		
New Hampshire		Oklahoma		
North Carolina		South Dakota		
Oregon		Texas		
Rhode Island*		Utah		
South Carolina		West Virginia		
Tennessee				
Vermont*				
Virginia				
Washington				
Wyoming*				

Notes: 1) * means state where community college's governing board acts as a coordinating board 2) Wisconsin has the U-Wisconsin Centers and a vocational technical system

Typology of the 50 American States (2014). The table below is a snapshot of the national landscape for state-level community college governance structures in 2014; categorized utilizing the Katsinas taxonomy (1996). At the high-end, $n = 23$ states used the “*rational*” model as their structure for state-level community college governance (an increase from 1996). At the low-end, $n = 4$ states’ community college governance structure utilized a *same coordinating board as K-12 (but separate from universities)* model.

State-Level Community College Governance Structures (2014)

<u>Coordinating board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities (23 states)</u>	<u>Community colleges same coordinating board as K-12, separate from Universities (4 states)</u>	<u>Community colleges same coordinating board as Universities (12 states)</u>	<u>Coordination for community colleges under a university governing board (5 states)</u>	<u>No state coordinating board (6 states)</u>
California	Alabama	Arkansas	Alaska	Arizona
Colorado	Iowa*	Idaho	Hawaii	Indiana
Connecticut	Michigan*	Illinois	Maine	New Jersey
Delaware	South Dakota	Kansas	Minnesota	New Mexico
Florida		Missouri	New York	Pennsylvania
Georgia		Montana		Washington
Kentucky		Nebraska*		
Louisiana		Nevada		
Maryland		North Dakota		
Massachusetts		Ohio		
Mississippi**		Oklahoma*		
New Hampshire		Utah		
North Carolina				
Oregon				
Rhode Island*				
South Carolina				
Tennessee				
Texas				
Vermont				
Virginia				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming*				

Notes: 1) * means state where community college's governing board acts as a coordinating board 2) **Mississippi: has an independent agency 3) Wisconsin has the U-Wisconsin Centers and an area and vocational technical system

A Synopsis of Changes from 1996 to 2014. The next table reveals states who changed their state-level community college governance structure between 1996 and 2014.

States Who Have Changed Governance Structure Between 1996 & 2014

<u>States that changed</u> (14)	<u>Changed from</u>	<u>Changed to</u>
<i>Arizona</i>	Rational model	No coordinating board
<i>Georgia</i>	Under Univ. governing board	Rational model
<i>Illinois</i>	Rational model	Same coordinating board as Univ.
<i>Indiana</i>	Rational model	No coordinating board
<i>Kansas</i>	Same coordinating board as K-12; separate from Universities	Same coordinating board as Univ.
<i>Kentucky</i>	Under Univ. governing board	Rational model
<i>Louisiana</i>	Same coordinating board as Univ.	Rational model
<i>Maryland</i>	No coordinating board	Rational model
<i>New Mexico</i>	Same coordinating board as Univ.	No coordinating board
<i>South Dakota</i>	Same coordinating board as Univ.	Same coordinating board as K-12; separate from Universities
<i>Texas</i>	Same coordinating board as Univ.	Rational model
<i>Washington</i>	Rational model	No coordinating board
<i>West Virginia</i>	Same coordinating board as Univ.	Rational model
<i>Wisconsin</i>	No coordinating board	Rational model

In all, $n = 14$ states (one-third of the U.S.) had changed their state-level community college governance structure from one type to another between 1996 and 2014. As we can see, significant changes related to state-level community college governance structure occurred across the United States. For example, $n = 4$ states changed their structure to a *no coordinating board model*; $n = 3$ *rational model* states changed their structure to a *no coordinating board model*, while conversely, $n = 2$ *no coordinating board* states changed their structure to a *rational model*.

Other changes occurred, $n = 2$ states, whose structure was *under a university governing board* changed to a *rational model*, and $n = 2$ states with a structure of *same coordinating board as university* model changed to a *rational model*. What is interesting is that of all $n = 14$ states who changed, they do not cluster around any particular region of the United States (e.g., the Midwest). In fact, they seem to be spread out across the entire United States.

NCSDCC Survey Results

In all, forty-five out of fifty American ($n = 45$) states were captured in this survey by the responses of their community college directors, whom are members of the *National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges*. Repeated attempts were made, but five states did not end up responding to this survey: Alaska, Arizona, North Dakota, New York, and Vermont. The survey had a 90% response rate.

State-Level Community College Governance Structures by State (2015)

<u>Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Univ.</u> (19)	<u>Same coordinating/governing board as K-12, but separate from Univ.</u> (2)	<u>Same coordinating/governing board as Univ.</u> (17)	<u>Coordination for CC governance falls beneath a Univ. coordinating/governing board</u> (3)	<u>No state-level coordinating or governing board</u> (4)
Alabama	Iowa	Arkansas	Idaho	Maryland
California	Florida	Connecticut	Indiana	Michigan
Colorado		Hawaii	Montana	Pennsylvania
Delaware		Kansas		South Dakota
Georgia		Massachusetts		
Illinois		Minnesota		
Kentucky		Missouri		
Louisiana		Nebraska		
Maine		Nevada		
Mississippi		New Mexico		
New Hampshire		Ohio		
New Jersey		Oklahoma		
North Carolina		Oregon		
South Carolina		Rhode Island		
Virginia		Tennessee		
Washington		Texas		
West Virginia		Utah		
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				

Type of Responsibility/Authority by (#) of Responses

<u>Type of Responsibility/Function</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>% Of Respondents</u>
<i>Establish policies and approves actions related to faculty and personnel</i>	21	47
<i>Hire, evaluate, and terminate CEO</i>	20	44
<i>Ensure fiscal integrity</i>	28	62
<i>Academic program review and approval</i>	33	73
<i>State-wide planning, i.e., strategic plan, facilities, technology plans</i>	33	73
<i>State-wide policy leadership</i>	34	76
<i>Defines mission for the state's higher education system</i>	16	36
<i>Defines its mission of each higher education sector</i>	10	22
<i>Formulates legislative agenda</i>	25	56
<i>Other decision-making authority (please specify):</i>	21	47

<u>State</u>	<u>Other decision-making authority (please specify):</u>
<i>California</i>	Promulgate regulations governing the community colleges.
<i>Colorado</i>	It is a governing board that decides all matters of Governance & is the sole career & technical agency in the state.
<i>Georgia</i>	Defines mission for the state's public two-year college system not for all public higher education in the state
<i>Illinois</i>	Coordinating with general assembly
<i>Iowa</i>	Rulemaking; state accreditation of community colleges
<i>Maryland</i>	The Maryland Higher Education Commission is not a statewide coordinating body, but we administer all state funds to the community colleges, undertake academic program review & approval & define the mission for the state's higher education sector.
<i>Minnesota</i>	All public 2-year colleges & 4-year universities in Minnesota, with the exception of the University of Minnesota & its campuses, are part of a single system governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities.
<i>Mississippi</i>	The MCCB is the agency designated: 1. To authorize disbursements of state appropriated funds to community & junior colleges through orders in the minutes of the board. 2. To fix standards for community & junior college to qualify for appropriations, & qualifications for community & junior college teachers. 3. MCCB is the designated agency over Workforce Training 4. MCCB is the designated agency over Adult Basic Education 5. MCCB is the designated agency over Proprietary School & College Registration. 6. MCCB contracts with the Mississippi Department of Education to operate the day-to-day operations of Career & Technical Education 7. MCCB audits the attendance & enrollment of students at the community colleges & uses these audited numbers to allocate funds to the colleges.
<i>Montana</i>	Seven of the two-year colleges fall under the direct governance of the Board of Regents which is a governing board. We have three community college districts which are coordinated & supervised by the Board of Regents & governed by their locally elected boards of trustees
<i>New Jersey</i>	Lead state-level advocacy efforts with the Governor's Office & state policymakers. Submit state budget request. Develop community college funding formula for operation aid. Coordinate allocation of capital funding. Review courses for state aid eligibility. Offer trustee education programs. Provide customized training programs through statewide community college workforce development consortium. Coordinate joint purchasing among the state's community colleges through a Joint Purchasing Consortium. Coordinate allocation of federal Perkins funding.
<i>Oklahoma</i>	Comprised of 25 colleges/universities. The State System is coordinated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, & each institution is governed by a board of regents. The State Regents prescribe academic standards of higher education, determine functions & courses of study at state colleges & universities, grant degrees, & approve each public colleges & university's allocations, as well as tuition & fees within the limits set by the Oklahoma Legislature; also manages scholarships & special programs. While the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education is the coordinating board of control for all institutions in the State System of Higher Education, governing boards of regents & boards of trustees are responsible for the operation & management of each State System institution or higher education program.
<i>South Dakota</i>	SD Department of Education has oversight of the state's four technical institutes (includes Lake Area Technical Institute, Mitchell Technical Institute, Southeast Technical Institute, Western Dakota Technical Institute), we do not have a community college system.

Type of Coordinating/Governing Body by State

<u>State governing board</u>	<u>State coordinating council</u>	<u>Association of community college presidents</u>	<u>Association of community college trustees</u>	<u>Combination of any of the above</u>	<u>Other, please specify</u>
Alabama	West Virginia	Arkansas	Nebraska	California	Delaware
Colorado		Idaho	Tennessee	Georgia	Florida
Connecticut		Massachusetts	Wyoming	Kentucky	Illinois
Hawaii		Maryland		Ohio	Iowa
Indiana		Missouri		Oregon	Kansas
Louisiana		Pennsylvania		South Carolina	Michigan
Maine					Minnesota
Nevada					Mississippi
New Hampshire					Montana
North Carolina					New Jersey
Rhode Island					New Mexico
Utah					Oklahoma
Virginia					South Dakota
Washington					Texas
					Wisconsin

Coordinating/Governing Body by Level of Authority

<u>Body</u>	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>None</u>
<i>State governing board</i>	14	0	0	0
<i>State coordinating council</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Association of community college presidents</i>	1	1	2	2
<i>Association of community college trustees</i>	2	0	1	0
<i>Combination of any of the above</i>	2	4	0	0
<i>Other, please specify</i>	7	5	1	2
Total	26	11	4	4

Level of Authority by State

<u>A Great Deal</u> (26)	<u>Some</u> (11)	<u>A Little</u> (4)	<u>None</u> (4)
Alabama	California	Arkansas	Maryland
Colorado	Florida	Missouri	Michigan
Connecticut	Iowa	Nebraska	Pennsylvania
Delaware	Massachusetts	Texas	South Dakota
Georgia	Mississippi		
Hawaii	New Jersey		
Idaho	New Mexico		
Illinois	Ohio		
Indiana	Oregon		
Kansas	South Carolina		
Kentucky	West Virginia		
Louisiana			
Maine			
Minnesota			
Montana			
Nevada			
New Hampshire			
North Carolina			
Oklahoma			
Rhode Island			
Tennessee			
Utah			
Virginia			
Washington			
Wisconsin			
Wyoming			

Higher Ed. /CC Governance Study within Past Five Years by CC Governance Structure

<u>Answer</u>	<u>Coordinating/ governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities</u>	<u>Same coordinating/ governing board as K- 12, but separate from Universities</u>	<u>Same coordinating/ governing board as Universities</u>	<u>Coordination for community college governance falls beneath a University coordinating/gov- erning board</u>	<u>No state- level coordinating or governing board</u>
<i>Yes</i>	2	0	4	0	0
<i>No</i>	17	2	13	3	4
<i>Total</i>	25	2	26	3	4

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the state-level community college governance structures of the 50 American States and categorize each state utilizing the Katsinas taxonomy. The purpose of this study was to conduct a more thorough document analysis, and tabulate results from a survey sent to the *National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges*. Having an up-to-date taxonomy of state-level community college governance structures allows community college leaders across the country to have a better understanding about the profiles of other states' power-structures, policymaking making process, governance, and administration of community colleges. This project anticipated that there would be dissimilarities in the profiling of state-level community college governance structures in survey results compared to pre-survey knowledge and other. Data was gathered using a survey that was first distributed in-person at the annual NCSDDC conference, July 2015, and afterwards adapted online using Qualtrics software to electronically distribute to members not able to attend the annual conference.

The respondents' answer to the first question, *which of the following categories best describes your state-level community college governance structure*, exhibited somewhat anticipated results, but there were differences in the survey results compared to what was known (or thought to be known) before this survey and study was. Highlight in the table below, there were differences for eleven (n=11) states. They are: Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Washington. Moreover, several themes from the survey were discovered.

Themes that emerged from survey responses:

1. States whose *coordinating/governing board for community colleges is separate from K-12 and Universities* had the most instances for each responsibility/authority across the board, except for *defining its mission of each higher education sector*.
2. *Defining its mission of each higher education sector* was not a common responsibility/authority for state-level coordinating/governing boards and state-level governance structures.
3. The *state governing board* category had over twice as many states identifying for all responsibilities/authorities listed, compared to those that identified as either *state coordinating council, association of community college presidents, association of community college trustees, combination of any of the above*, the only exception was *other, please specify*.
4. The most common combination of state-level CC governance structure and state-level CC governing/coordinating body was *coordinating/governing board for CC separate from K-12 & universities* and *state governing board* (n=8 states). Another popular combination was *same coordinating/governing board as universities* and *state governing board*. There were numerous other combinations with three counts or less (n ≤ 3), this highlighted the diversity and variety of ways that community colleges are currently being governed/coordinated at the state-level across the United States.

5. Fourteen states (n=14) had the combination of a *state governing board with a great deal* of authority. This is the most prevalent combination of the forty-five (n=45) states represented in this survey. The next highest count with seven states (n=7), is a combination of *other, please specify with a great deal of authority*.
6. We saw that a majority of respondents (and U.S. states) have a coordinating/governing board with *a great deal* of authority/responsibility in the state-level governance of their community colleges. Interestingly though, eight states (n=8) had a state-level coordinating/governing board with “little to no” authority/responsibility in the state-level governance over their community colleges.
7. Eight states (n=8) were making a serious attempt to change their current state-level community college governance structure and/or have very recently done so. These states were: Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Wisconsin.
8. When thinking about impact and drivers of change, the majority of respondents mentioned these as factors: *student success/completion, affordability, workforce/economic needs, politics, and legislative/politics (i.e. state government)*.

Differences between Document Analysis and Survey Results

<u>State</u>	<u>Document Analysis (2011-2014)</u>	<u>Survey Response (2015)</u>
<i>Alabama</i>	Same coordinating/governing board as K-12, but separate from universities	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities
<i>Connecticut</i>	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities	Same coordinating/governing board as Universities
<i>Florida</i>	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities	Same coordinating/governing board as K-12, but separate from Universities
<i>Illinois</i>	Same coordinating/governing board as Universities	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities
<i>Indiana</i>	No state-level coordinating or governing board	Coordination for community college governance falls beneath a university coordinating/governing board
<i>Maine</i>	Coordination for community college governance falls beneath a university coordinating/governing board	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities

<i>Michigan</i>	Same coordinating/governing board as K-12, but separate from Universities	No state-level coordinating or governing board
<i>New Jersey</i>	No state-level coordinating or governing board	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities
<i>New Mexico</i>	No state-level coordinating or governing board	Same coordinating/governing board as Universities
<i>South Dakota</i>	Same coordinating/governing board as K-12, but separate from Universities	No state-level coordinating or governing board
<i>Washington</i>	No state-level coordinating or governing board	Coordinating/governing board for community colleges separate from K-12 & Universities

Analysis of the study's data clearly demonstrates variance between what was anticipated and what was actually revealed in the survey results surrounding state-level community college governance structures. There were some surprising and intriguing results regarding levels of authority for coordinating/governing body and developing trends/forces impacting change across the 50 American States. This study was accomplished through the research tradition of basic constructionist, the effort of examining, analyzing, and interpreting documents and surveys to construct meaning. This allowed me to focus on how participants responded to the survey, and also how to construct meaning from the data by triangulating with other resources and documents. This theoretical framework also allowed the analysis of existing literature, documents, and NCSDECC survey results within the U.S. context of existing cultures, settings, and socio-political factors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Embedded in a complex array of historic, social, economic, and political forces, are a number of different taxonomies for community college governance structures of all 50 American States. The research presented in this paper only begins to scratch the surface. Further research is needed on why eleven states changed their community college governance structures since 2014. Using grounded theory, a new taxonomy could be created to depict the 21st century national landscape of state-level community college governance structures. Moreover, additional research is needed to investigate whether or not there is a relationship between community college funding structures and state-level community college governance structures. It is recommended that dissemination of these results occur to assist state directors in becoming more aware and informed about their neighbors in how they conduct business in state-level governance of their community colleges. It may be possible that the executive summary attached to this report will reach enough hands of state directors to indirectly impact change across the 50 American States in state-level governance of community colleges.

LIMITATIONS

This study had a few limitations. First, a single-body, the *National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges*, was used as survey participants in this case-study research to categorize the state-level community college governance structure of the 50 American States. As a result, it was a small group of participants and not a traditional quantitative sample, it was a purposive sample. Second, the results collected from state directors for the 50 American States was self-reported information. Therefore, the responses to survey items are subject to individual perceptions about their state-level community college governance structures, in addition to, matter-of-fact legislative policy and statute. Nearly 90% of community college state directors responded to the survey; forty-five states were represented in this survey (n = 45).

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