

Colorado State Profile

November 1, 2020

State profiles for the 50-State Comparison on postsecondary governance structures summarize information about coordinating boards/agencies and governing boards, administrative/service agencies, advisory groups and membership organizations. The most in-depth information is provided for statewide and major postsecondary systemwide coordinating boards/agencies and governing boards.

Note: This resource does not include information related to setting tuition rates, administering funding formulas or allocating funds. The state profile information is based primarily on statutes, codes and state and postsecondary system board/agency policies. To the extent possible, Education Commission of the States reached out to state and system officials to verify our information.

State Overview

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education is a statewide coordinating board for public postsecondary education and oversees independent degree-granting institution authorization. Colorado's Department of Higher Education is the administrative agency charged with carrying out the board's policies and overseeing various programs, including student financial aid and credit transfer, and providing data and information services. The department's executive director is appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. Individual boards, with members appointed by the governor, govern the campuses of Colorado State University; while an elected board governs the University of Colorado campuses. The State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education governs the two-year colleges, except for two local district colleges.

Data Point	Description
Single Statewide Coordinating Board/Agency or Governing Board and State Postsecondary Governance Models	
Single Statewide Coordinating Board (or Agency) or Governing Board for All Public Higher Education	Yes
State Postsecondary Governance Model	Single, statewide coordinating board/agency



Data Point	Description
Statewide and Major Systemwide Coordinating Boards (or Agency) or Governing Boards	
Entity Name	Colorado Commission on Higher Education
Entity Function	Coordinating
Scope of Authority	Statewide
Legal Authority	Statutory
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public four-year, public two-year and other (e.g., Independent/non-profit, proprietary, online or specialty)
Primary Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve or oversee interstate compacts and reciprocity agreements (e.g., SARA, tuition agreements) - Approve institutional missions - Develop and/or administer academic policies or programs (e.g., admissions, transfer) - Develop master/strategic plans for state or system - Engage in statewide or systemwide policy planning - License or approve/authorize specified institutions - Oversee residency requirements for tuition purposes - Recommend or approve establishing, merging or closing institutions - Review or approve facility/capital construction plans
Budget Role for Institutions	Review and recommend
New Academic Program Role	Limited academic program role
Academic Program Role Notes	For majority of cases, institutions do not need approval for new academic programs; exceptions include programs that are outside the statutorily defined role of their mission. The Commission does review programs for duplication and direct discontinuation of programs.



Data Point	Description
Appointing/Hiring Authority of Higher Education Executive Officer	Governor with approval of Senate or legislature
Number of Board Members (Voting and Non-voting)	11
Number of Board Members Appointed Based on Role or Selected	11
Number of Board Members Elected through General Election	0
Board Member Composition and Selection	11 members appointed by governor with consent of Senate.
Do Institutions Governed (or Coordinated) by a Postsecondary System Board have Individual Governing Boards?	Not applicable
Type of Institutions with Individual Governing Boards	Not applicable
Type of Institutions without Individual Governing Boards	Not applicable
Website	https://highered.colorado.gov/
Citations	Colorado Revised Statute, Title 23, Article 1 Colorado Commission on Higher Education Policies and Procedures
Agencies and System Offices Affiliated with Coordinating and Governing Boards	
Entity Name	Colorado Department of Higher Education
Entity Function	Administrative/service



Data Point	Description
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public four-year, public two-year and other (e.g., Independent/non-profit, proprietary, online or specialty)
Website	https://highered.colorado.gov/default.html
Administrative and Advisory Entities	
Entity Name	Not applicable
Other Postsecondary System and Multi-Campus Institutional Boards	
Entity Name	University of Colorado Board of Regents
Entity Function	Governing
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public four-year
Website	https://www.cu.edu/regents
Other Postsecondary System and Multi-Campus Institutional Boards	
Entity Name	Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System
Entity Function	Governing
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public four-year
Website	http://www.csusystem.edu/board-of-governors/board-members
Other Postsecondary System and Multi-Campus Institutional Boards	



Data Point	Description
Entity Name	State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education (Colorado)
Entity Function	Governing
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public two-year
Website	https://www.cccs.edu/about-cccs/state-board/
Membership Organizations	
Entity Name	Independent Higher Education of Colorado
Entity Function	Membership
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Independent/non-profit
Website	No website available