

Wisconsin State Profile

March 1, 2019

State profiles for the data visualization and 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

Wisconsin does not have a single, statewide coordinating or governing board for postsecondary education. The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System governs the institutions, which do not have local boards, and appoints the system’s president. As of July 2018, the 13 two-year campuses formerly known as UW Colleges became branch campuses of seven of the system’s four-year comprehensive or research institutions. The system office carries out board policies, administers academic and student success programs, and conducts research and policy analysis, among other responsibilities. Wisconsin’s Technical College System Board coordinates the technical institutions, which are governed by local boards, and appoints the president. The system office carries out board policies, provides data and reporting services, and administers academic and workforce programs, among other responsibilities. The Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board administers student financial aid programs, provides training related to financial assistance and oversees the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). The Educational Approval Program, located within the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services, is charged with authorizing private trade, technical and other degree-granting schools.

Data Point	Description
Single Statewide Coordinating or Governing Board/Agency	
Single Statewide Coordinating Board (or Agency) or Governing Board for All Public Higher Education	No



Data Point	Description
Statewide and Major Systemwide Coordinating Boards (or Agency) or Governing Boards	
Entity Name	Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System
Entity Function	Governing
Scope of Authority	Systemwide
Legal Authority	Statutory
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public four-year and public two-year
Primary Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advise and/or provide recommendations to state policy and education leaders - Approve or oversee interstate compacts and reciprocity agreements (e.g., SARA, tuition agreements) - Approve presidential hiring and/or compensation - Approve institutional missions - Approve of or award degrees and credentials - Determine and/or regulate courses of study - Develop and/or Administer academic policies or programs (e.g., admissions, transfer) - Develop master/strategic plans for state or system - Develop and/or oversee accountability or performance measures - Engage in statewide or systemwide policy planning - Ensure system/institutional efficiencies - Ensure academic program and/or institutional quality - Govern systems and/or institutions - Monitor or evaluate system/institutional effectiveness - Promote or advocate for institutions - Recommend or approve establishing, merging or closing institutions - Review existing academic programs - Review or approve facility/capital construction plans - Set faculty and personnel policies



Data Point	Description
Budget Role for Institutions	Approve and recommend
New Academic Program Role	Review and approve
Appointing/Hiring Authority of Higher Education Executive Officer	Governing board
Number of Board Members (Voting and Non-voting)	18
Number of Board Members Appointed, Serve Based on Role or Selected	18
Number of Board Members Elected through General Election	0
Board Member Composition and Selection	18 members with 16 appointed by governor and subject to confirmation by Senate; state superintendent of public instruction and president or a designee of Wisconsin Technical College System Board serve as ex-officio members; 2 students are appointed, one of which must be a non-traditional student.
Do Institutions Governed (or Coordinated) by a Postsecondary System Board have Individual Governing Boards?	No
Type of Institutions with Individual Governing Boards	Not applicable
Type of Institutions without Individual Governing Boards	Public four-year and public two-year
Website	https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/
Citations	Wis. Stat. Ann. § 36 Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System Policies



Data Point	Description
Statewide and Major Systemwide Coordinating Boards (or Agency) or Governing Boards	
Entity Name	Wisconsin Technical College System Board
Entity Function	Coordinating
Scope of Authority	Systemwide
Legal Authority	Statutory
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public two-year
Primary Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve or oversee interstate compacts and reciprocity agreements (e.g., SARA, tuition agreements) - Determine and/or regulate courses of study - Develop and/or administer academic policies or programs (e.g., admissions, transfer) - Develop master/strategic plans for state or system - Review existing academic programs - Review or approve facility/capital construction plans
Budget Role for Institutions	Review and recommend
New Academic Program Role	Review and approve
Appointing/Hiring Authority of Higher Education Executive Officer	Coordinating board
Number of Board Members (Voting and Non-voting)	13
Number of Board Members Appointed, Serve Based on Role or Selected	13



Data Point	Description
Number of Board Members Elected through General Election	0
Board Member Composition and Selection	13 members with 10 appointed by governor and confirmed by Senate; appointed members include employer, employee, farmer and student representatives and 6 public members; state superintendent of public instruction, secretary of department of workforce development and University of Wisconsin System president or board of regents designee serve as ex-officio members.
Do Institutions Governed (or Coordinated) by a Postsecondary System Board have Individual Governing Boards?	Yes
Type of Institutions with Individual Governing Boards	Public two-year
Type of Institutions without Individual Governing Boards	Not applicable
Website	http://www.wtcsystem.edu/about-us/governance/wtcs-board
Citations	Wis. Stat. Ann. § 38 Wisconsin Technical College System Board Policy Manual
Agencies and System Offices Affiliated with Coordinating and Governing Boards	
Entity Name	University of Wisconsin System Office
Entity Function	Administrative/service
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public four-year and public two-year
Website	https://www.wisconsin.edu/offices/



Data Point	Description
Agencies and System Offices Affiliated with Coordinating and Governing Boards	
Entity Name	Wisconsin Technical College System Office
Entity Function	Administrative/service
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public two-year
Website	https://www.wtcsystem.edu/
Administrative and Advisory Entities	
Entity Name	Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board
Entity Function	Financial aid agency
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"> - Administer state financial aid programs and/or loans - Approve or oversee interstate compacts and reciprocity agreements (e.g., SARA, tuition agreements) - Provide professional development and/or training
Appointing/Hiring Authority of Higher Education Executive Officer	Not applicable
Website	http://www.heab.state.wi.us/
Citations	Wis. Stat. Ann. § 39
Other Postsecondary System and Multi-Campus Institutional Boards	
Entity Name	Not applicable



Data Point	Description
Membership Organizations	
Entity Name	Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
Entity Function	Membership
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Independent/non-profit
Website	http://www.waicu.org/
Membership Organizations	
Entity Name	Wisconsin Technical College District Board Association
Entity Function	Membership
Type of Institutions Coordinated, Governed, Represented or Served by Entity	Public two-year
Website	http://www.districtboards.org/