Higher Education Politics & Policies

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Authority and Higher Education

State

- Regulatory and financial influence, particularly over public institutions
- Influential in guiding institutional development
- Accountability

Institution

- At least partial autonomy is important for schools
- Protects education from authoritative governance to varying degrees depending on nation state

Social Contract

*"How to **balance institutional autonomy** as freedom from interference of the state **with the accountability** of the institutions toward the state and the public for responsible use of public funds" (5)*

Three Key Premises of Higher Education Institutions

01 Knowledge

What type of knowledge and research is being produced?

02 Authority

Whose influence matters?

State (federal, state), University? Academic Oligarchy?

Whose preferences are shaping the direction of governance?

National? Regional? Political actors? Collective action? (e.g. Unions)

03 Institutional Autonomy

Involvement in policy/politics, governance, and managerial autonomy

Diversification

Vertical

Reputational diversification — Differences between prestige

Functional Diversification — Different missions, purposes; functional task division (i.e. community colleges, 4-year state colleges, research universities)

Horizontal

Neoliberalism

Economic Reform Policies	Implementing more “market-like” competitiveness
Change in Power	Restricting state’s role, empowering the individual
State’s Role	State control → State supervision (e.g. performance-based funding, accountability measures)
Financing	Passing burden of financing education from state to individual

Market Industry

Markets

-Demand/Supply through price mechanisms
-Consumers make choices on the basis of information about price, quality, and availability

Marketization

-The reorganization of the provision of goods and services as in the economic market
-More private providers, but the state still regulates

Markets: Public and Private Benefits of HE

Public

-Producing values and social legitimation
-Selecting elites
-Training for the labor force
-Producing new knowledge

Private

-Increased wages and better financial recovery
-Growth in personal human capital*
-Improved health, improved education prospects for children, increased longevity

Heterogenous rates of return — gaps across gender, socioeconomic levels, ethnicities, etc.

Marketization of Higher Education

Arguments for

-More internal efficiency due to increased competition
-Graduates receive private benefits (e.g. higher salaries)
-Greater supply of HE

Arguments against

-Market failure: inability to optimize efficiency
-Highly diversified funding (state, individuals)
-HE services are too diverse functionally and by reputation
-Exacerbates stratification (i.e. decreases social mobility)
-Reduces institutional diversity and potentially quality of education and value (think grade inflation, evaluation of work)

Global Higher Education Industry

Global Higher Education Industry

Students

Increase in enrollment and international mobility

Investments

Investments in HE, For-profit schools, and Collaborations between businesses and leading institutions

HE Job Market

Administrative Jobs, Faculty, and Private Consultants

Technology

Rapid expansion of eLearning and need for technological support in the advancement of HE

Higher Ed in A Post-Pandemic World

Business Model

Purpose & Credentialism

Access & Inclusion

Changes to Industry and Business Model

Online Options

- Threaten tradition HE model
- Cost effective, questioning & maximizing value
- Increased access
- Work from home

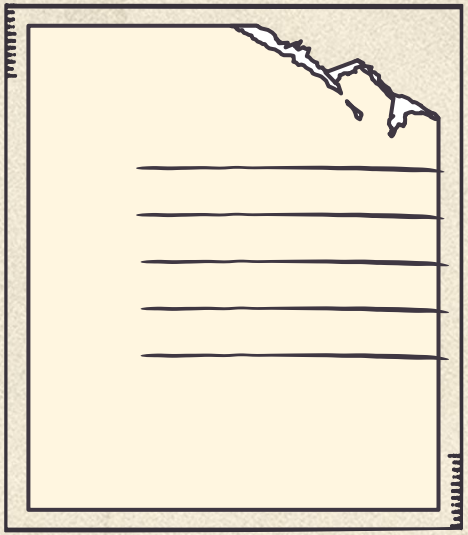
Evolving Purpose Behind Higher Education

Career-Focused

- Main objective: preparing for employment
- 2020 Gallup Survey of 32,585 currently enrolled college students: 88% of freshmen say "getting a good job" is main reason they enroll in college

Credentials

- Skills-based
- Google treating tech certificates equivalent to degree (130 companies)



Increasing Push for Equal Access

Equal Access

- Diversity across variety of backgrounds
- Disability Services
- Accomodations
- Care for well-being and mental health

Questions to Consider

How many publicly-supported HEIs does a nation need? What types?

Public?
Private non-profit?
Private for-profit?
Community?
Vocational?
Research?

How can HEI maximize efficiency, value, and rate of return?

Cost per student?
Can technology cut costs?
Research increasing or decreasing productivity?

Who should pay for HEIs?

Students?
Parents?
Tax payers/Government?

What should be the priorities of HEIs institutions?

Research Framework

Resource Dependency Theory

Does resource allocation affect researched topics?

Institutional Theory

Are universities copying themselves for success?

Resource Dependency Theory

- An analysis of how the scarcity of resources (funding) affects the decision making of universities.
- Universities adopt new research methods and new efficient methodology on the obtaining of resources.
- Allows for external sources of funding to control what is researched and taught in certain institutions.
- Is ultimately an adaptation to its environment.

Institutional Theory

What role do other institutions decisions play in decision-making?

Examines way in which institutions affect their environments and the structures of higher education, as they can reconstruct the norms and beliefs that guide actions.

Institutional Isomorphism - The phenomenon of increasing institutional similarities due to requirements of the state, prestige elevation, and market necessities.

Policy-Making in the US

Policy-Making in Congress

- Focuses on Higher Education through broader pieces of legislation.
- Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions committee (HELP) - Controls Educational Decisions
- Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies - Controls funding for such decisions.

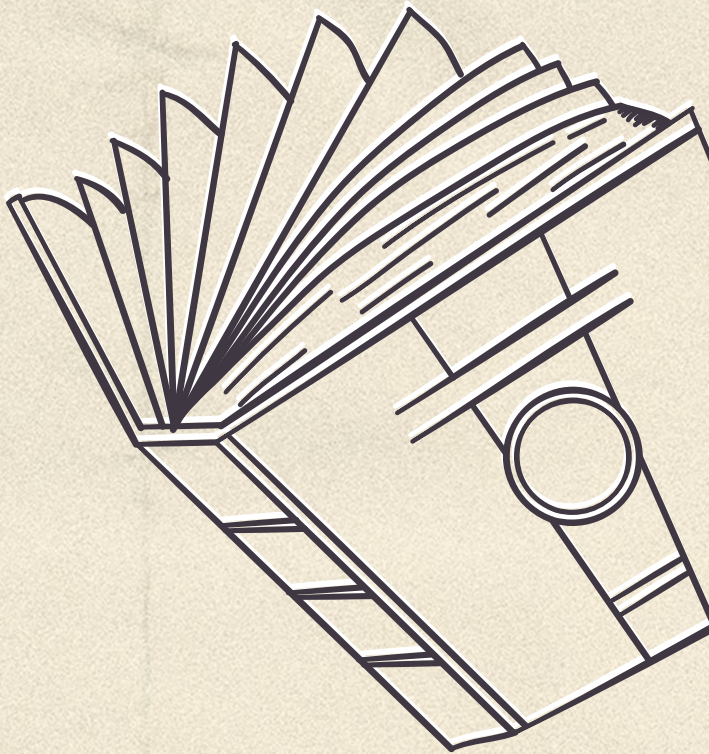
Department of Education

1. Federal Student Aid manages the majority of the DOE's budget.

   Shared information for the College Scorecard until 2014.

2. Works with the treasury in setting budgets.

3. Recognizes universities for accreditation.



Important Legislation

Higher Education Act (HEA)

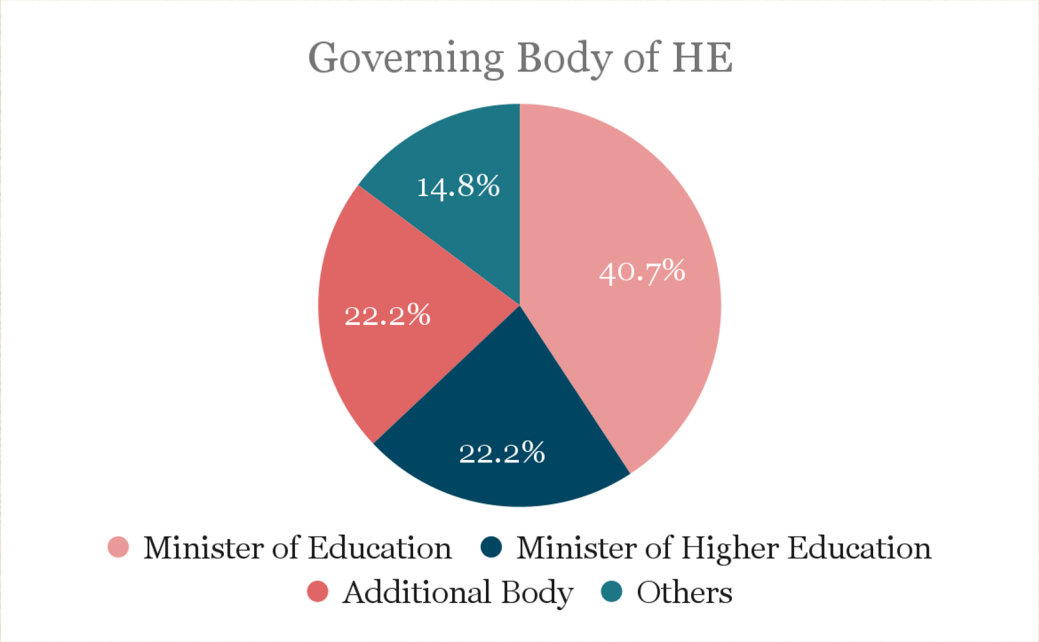
1965 - Increased federal funding, created scholarships, and provided low-interest loans to students.

Equal Opportunity in Education Act (Title IX)

1974 - Prohibits discrimination on any basis against faculty, students and staff and requires students' equal participation.

International Higher Educational Politics & Policies

Governance



Costa Rica and Guatemala are the only countries in the world where there is no government agency responsible for higher education.[1]

Target Groups for Equity

Equity Groups	Country Examples
First-generation students	United States
LGBTQIA[3]	Brazil, Colombia
Victims of sexual abuse / violence	Colombia, Ecuador, Spain
Deported migrants	Ecuador, Mexico
Children of invalid veterans or civil servants	Mexico, Russia, Vietnam
Foreign refugees	Australia, Colombia, New Zealand

Specific Equity Programs

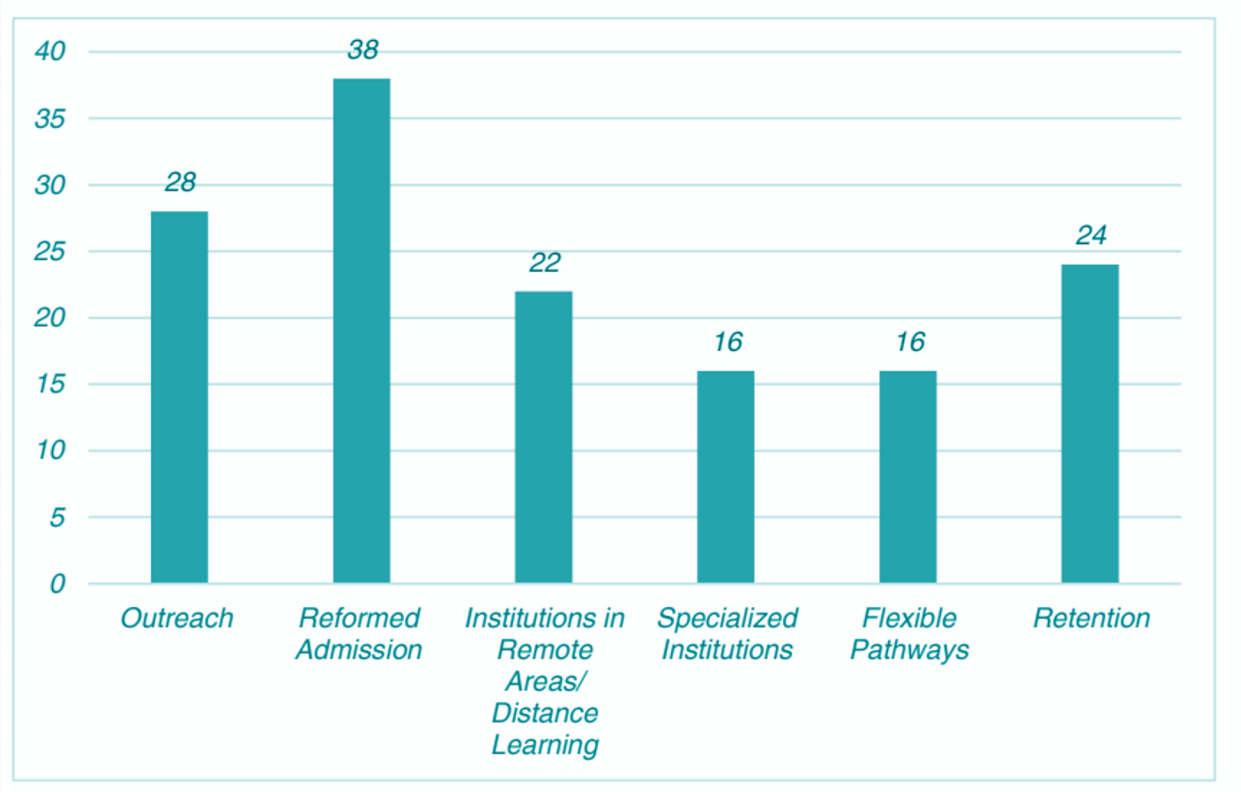


Figure from [1] Salmi, Jamil. (2018)

Different Financing Instruments

01

Kazakhstan

Voucher-like scheme for top students at public universities to attend private ones.

02

Pakistan

Government sponsored specific grants for girls in higher education.

03

Australia & New Zealand

Income-contingent student loan scheme (ICL)

Different Financing Instruments

04

South Africa

Funding based on Black student representation.

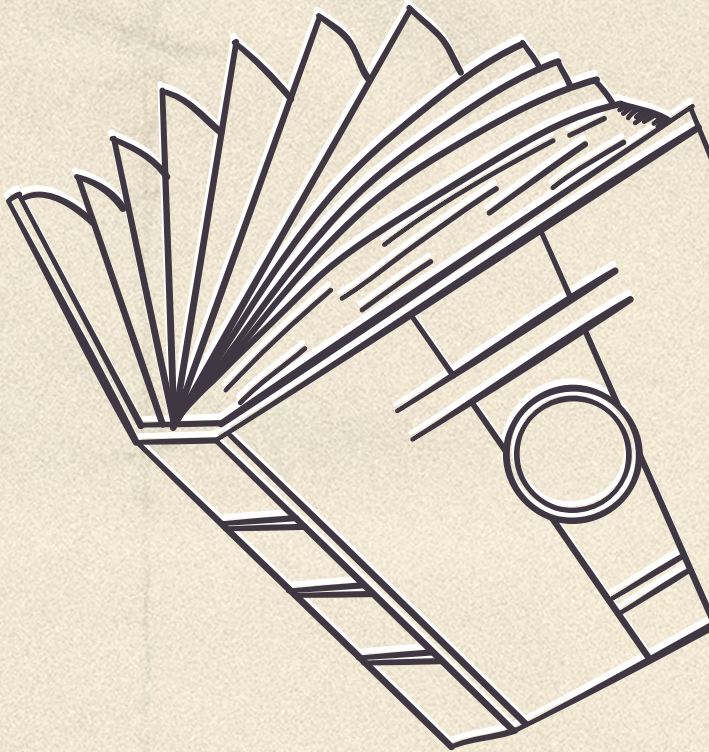
05

Ireland

Fund for Students with Disabilities.

Inter-Governmental Organizations

- United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO)
- World Bank
- European Commission
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)



No regional development bank focuses on equity in Higher Education except for the Asian Development Bank.

References

[1] Salmi, Jamil. All around the world – Higher education equity policies across the globe. Lumina Foundation. 2018.

[2] Sociol 1104. Chapter 2: Higher Education Politics & Policies. 2021