

State Coordination of Higher Education: Texas in a Comparative Perspective

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No “Ideal” Model

- Each State’s Structure Evolved in Response to Unique State Issues/Conditions
 - Modes of Provision (Public vs. Private)
 - History/Culture
 - Role of Government
 - Governor
 - State Legislature
 - Geo-Political Balance, Regional Disparities
 - Budgeting and Finance Policy and Process

Continued

No “Ideal” Model (Continued)

- Not a Good Idea: Copying Another State’s Structure—Imposing on One State the Solutions to Another State’s Problems
- But:
 - Alignment of Governance (Decision-Making Authority) with State Priorities **Is** Important
 - States Can Learn from the Experience of Other States in Addressing Common Problems/Issues

Coordination Versus Governance

- Authority and Functions of **Coordinating Boards** Are Distinctly Different From **Governing Boards** of Institutions and Systems
- **Coordinating Boards:**
 - Focus on Statewide Policy Leadership, Not on Governing/Managing Systems or Individual Institutions
 - Do Not Govern Institutions (e.g. Make Decisions Regarding Appointment of System and Institutional Presidents or Faculty and Other Personnel Issues)
- **In Texas Terminology:**
 - Coordinating Board: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
 - Governing Boards: Boards of Regents for UT, Texas A&M, etc. s

Comparative Perspective

- 23 States (including Texas) are Coordinating Board/Agency States
 - Statewide Coordinating Board/Agency (Regulatory or Advisory)
 - Two or More System or Institutional Governing Boards
 - Tradition of Decentralized Governance
- 24 States are Consolidated Governing Board States:
 - All Public Institutions Governed by One or More Statewide Governing Boards
 - No Statewide Coordinating Board (with significant authority)
- 1 State (Pennsylvania) has State Agency with Limited Authority
- 2 States (Michigan and Vermont) have No Statewide Entity

Origin and Functions of Coordinating Boards

- Most Established in mid-20th Century (1960s)
- Original Purpose:
 - Orderly Development during Massive Expansion in 1960s
 - Promote Mission Differentiation
 - Curb Unnecessary Duplication
 - Counter Turf Battles
 - “Suitably Sensitive Mechanism” Between State and Academy

Formal Authority Differs Among Coordinating Boards

- Significant Differences in Decision Authority
 - Budget and Finance Policy
 - Approval of Institutional Missions or Changes in Mission
 - Approval of New Campuses or New Academic Programs

Board's "Power" Depends Less on Formal Authority Than on:

- Board and Executive Leadership:
 - Reputation for Objectivity, Fairness, and Timeliness of Analysis and Advice to Legislative and Executive Branches
 - Capacity to Gain Trust and Respect (but Not Always Agreement) of the State Political *and* Institutional Leaders

Continued

Formal Versus Informal Authority (Continued)

- Institutional/System Leaders Who: Recognize and Support Effective Coordination To Address State and Regional Policy Issues that Cannot Be Addressed within Systems/Institutions or Only Through Voluntary Coordination

Common Functions

- Statewide Planning/Policy Leadership
- Maintaining Data/Information Systems
- Policy Analysis and Problem Resolution
- Budget Review and Recommendations
- Academic Program Review/Approval
- Accountability

Continued

Common Functions (Continued)

- Program/Project Administration
- Student Financial Assistance
- Licensure/Authorization of Non-Public Institutions

Effective Coordinating Boards

- Focus on Developing and Gaining Broad Commitment to Long-Term Goals for the State (A Public Agenda)
- Link Finance and Accountability to State Goals
- Emphasize Use of Data to Inform Policy Development and Public Accountability
- Emphasize Mission Differentiation

Continued

Effective Boards (Continued)

- Insist on Quality, Objectivity and Fairness in Analysis and Consultative Processes
- Exhibit Consistency and Integrity in Values, Focus, Policy Development, and Communications

Continued

Effective Boards (Continued)

- Exhibit Balance in Processes and Decision-making:
 - Non-partisan
 - Legislative and Executive Branches
 - State and Institutions
 - Among All Sectors and Providers
 - Among All Regions
 - Across All Dimensions of Mission (Community College Services to Research and Graduate Education)

Continued

Effective Boards (Continued)

- Focus on Core Policy Functions (Planning/ Policy Leadership, Budget/Resource Allocation, Evaluation and Accountability)
- Demonstrate Willingness to Take Stands on Matters of Principle

Continued

Trends in State Coordination

- State Policy Leadership Focused on Public Agenda
 - Increasing the Educational Attainment of the Population
 - Quality of Life
 - Economy
- Decentralized Institutional Governance and Deregulation Balanced by Accountability for Performance/Outcomes Linked to Public Agenda
- Financing Policies that:
 - Use Incentives for Performance and Response to Public Agenda/Public Priorities
 - Align State Appropriations, Tuition Policy and Student Aid Policy

Issues Facing Coordinating Boards Across the U.S. (Not Specifically Texas)

- Strategic Plans/Master Plans:
 - Lack Clear Goals and Related Metrics
 - Focus on Institutional Issues, not Public Agenda
 - Not Linked to Budget/Finance and Accountability
 - Ignored by Governor and State Legislature in Policy Making and Budget Process
- Focus on Internal Institutional Issues, Not on Major State/Public Priorities

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Issues (Continued)

- Workload Dominated by Administrative and Regulatory Functions Drives Out Attention to Policy Leadership
- Limited Policy Analysis Capacity
- Weak Board Appointments (Most Influential Appointments Made to Governing Boards)
- Turnover of Executive Leadership

Issues (Continued)

- Lack of Capacity to Gain Trust and Respect of the State's Leaders (Governor and Legislature) as well as University Leaders for:
 - Objectivity and Fairness in Decision Processes
 - Transparency and Responsiveness to Data Requests from Governor and Legislature

Continued

External Realities That Impede Effective Statewide Coordination

- Changes in Gubernatorial and Legislative Leaders: Loss of “Memory” of Rationale and Functions of Coordinating Board
- System and Institutional Lobbying Undercuts the Coordinating Board’s Policy Recommendations
- State Budget Cuts Limit Staff Capacity

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External Realities (Continued)

- Accumulation of Legislative Mandates (often outdated) Saps Staff Time Away from Strategic Planning and Policy leadership
- Increasing Polarization in Policy Process Makes Gaining Consensus on Goals and Priorities a Daunting Challenge

Conclusion

- To Compete in the Global Economy, States Must Have Diversified Higher Education Enterprises with Capacity to:
 - Educate a Highly Skilled Workforce
 - Contribute to an Expanding and Innovating Economy

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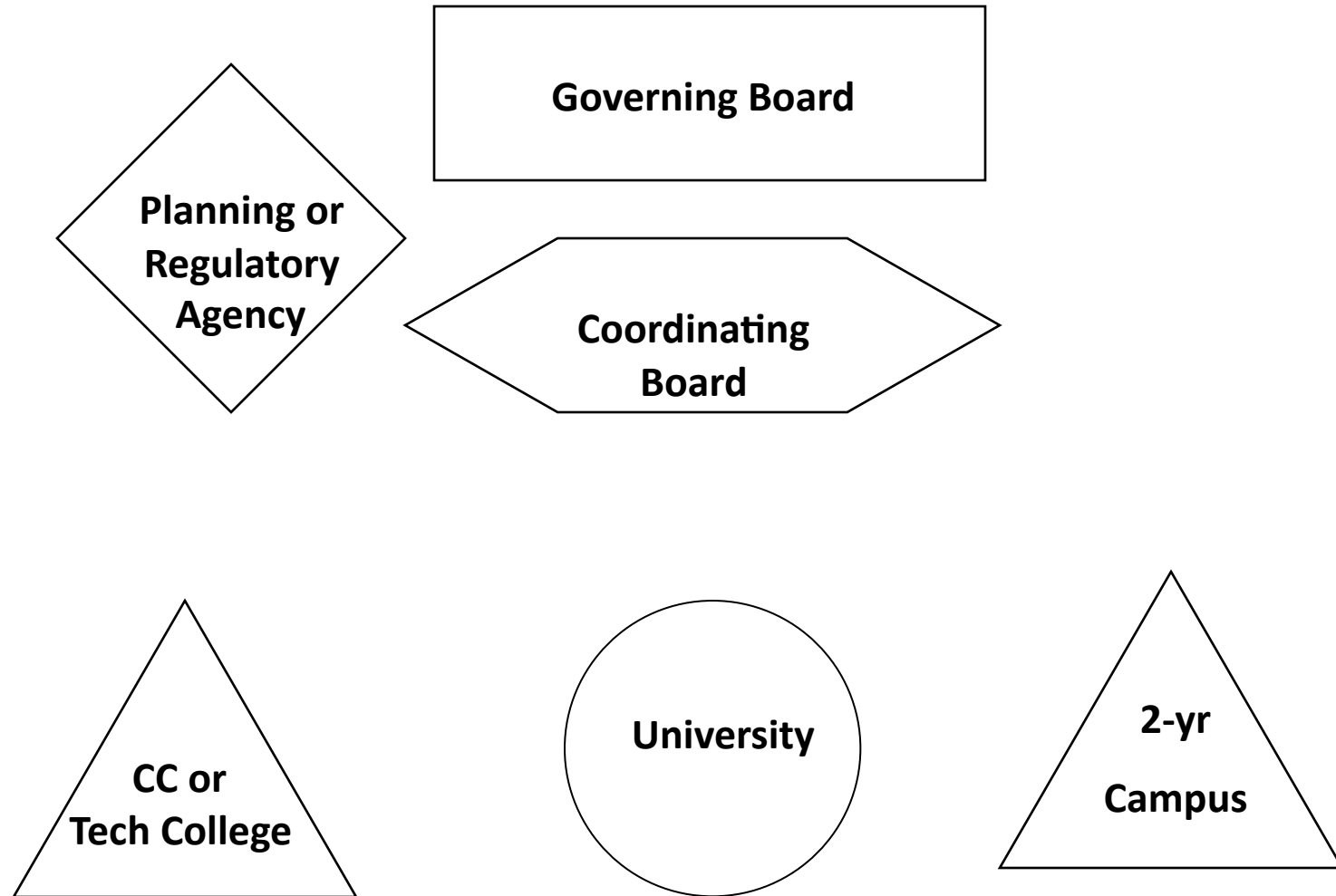
Conclusion (Continued)

- Each State Should Have Broad-Based Public Entity with Clear Charge to Lead and Coordinate the Higher Education Enterprise in the Public Interest
 - Set Clear Long Term Goals
 - Align Finance Policy with Goals
 - Hold the Higher Education Enterprise Accountable for Progress Toward Goals

Illustrations of Differences and Complexity of State Higher Education Structures

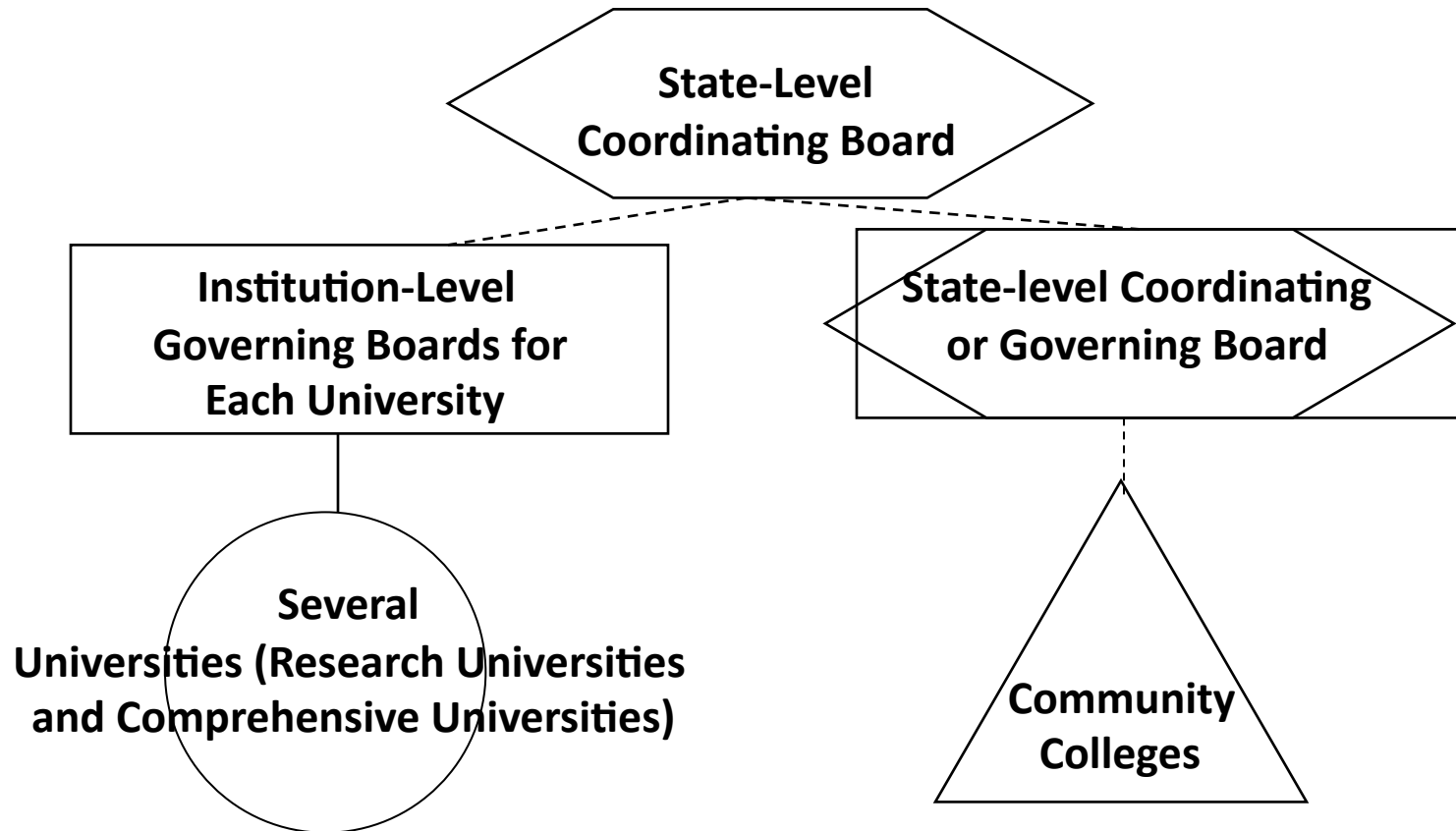
Of Necessity, the Following Illustrations Do Not Reflect the Nuances of Each State's Structure

Key to Symbols



Coordinating Board States

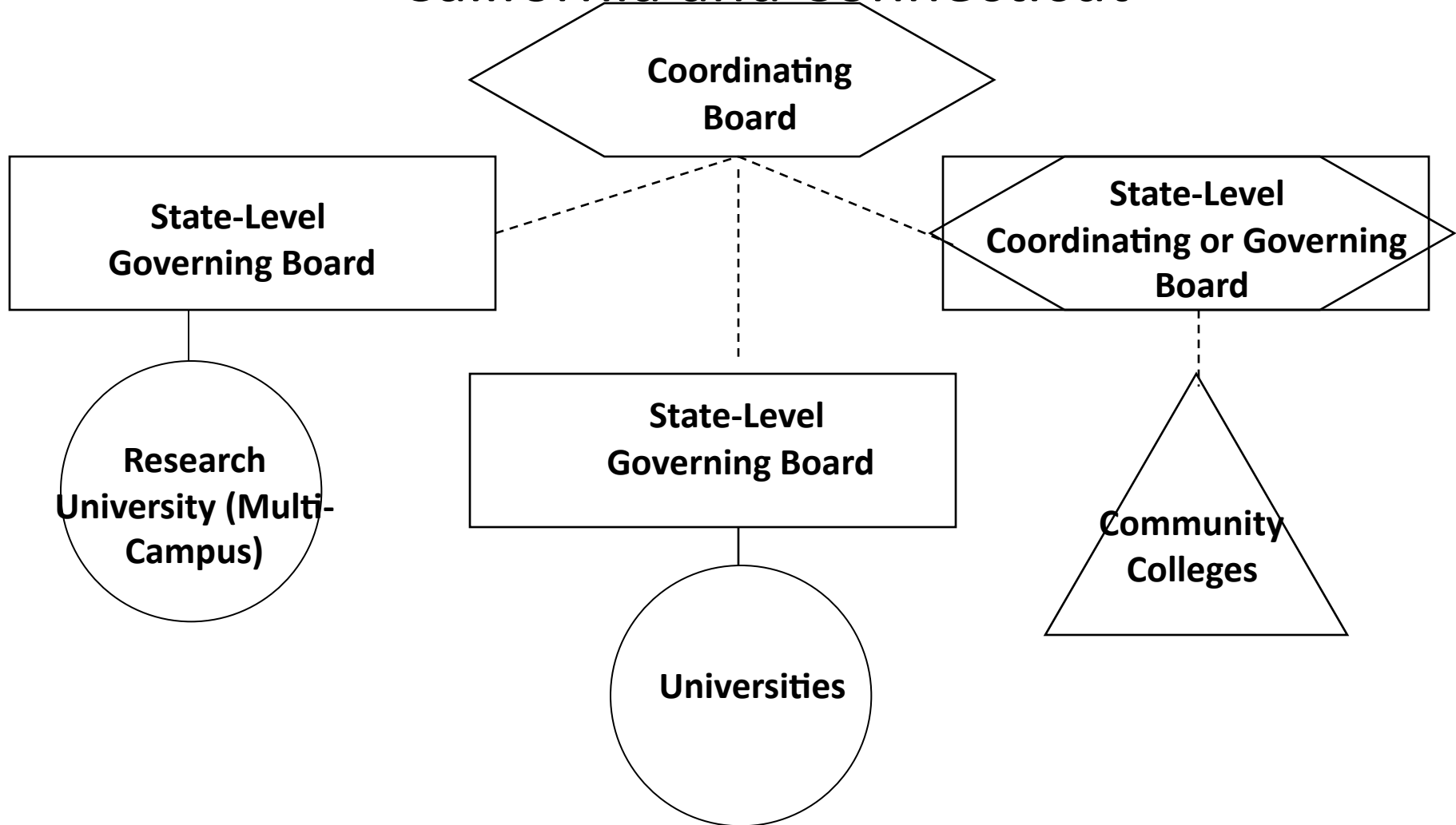
Kentucky, Virginia and Washington State



Explanation: Each public university has a governing board. State board for community colleges either governs the colleges or coordinates locally governed community colleges. Coordinating boards plan and coordinate the whole system.

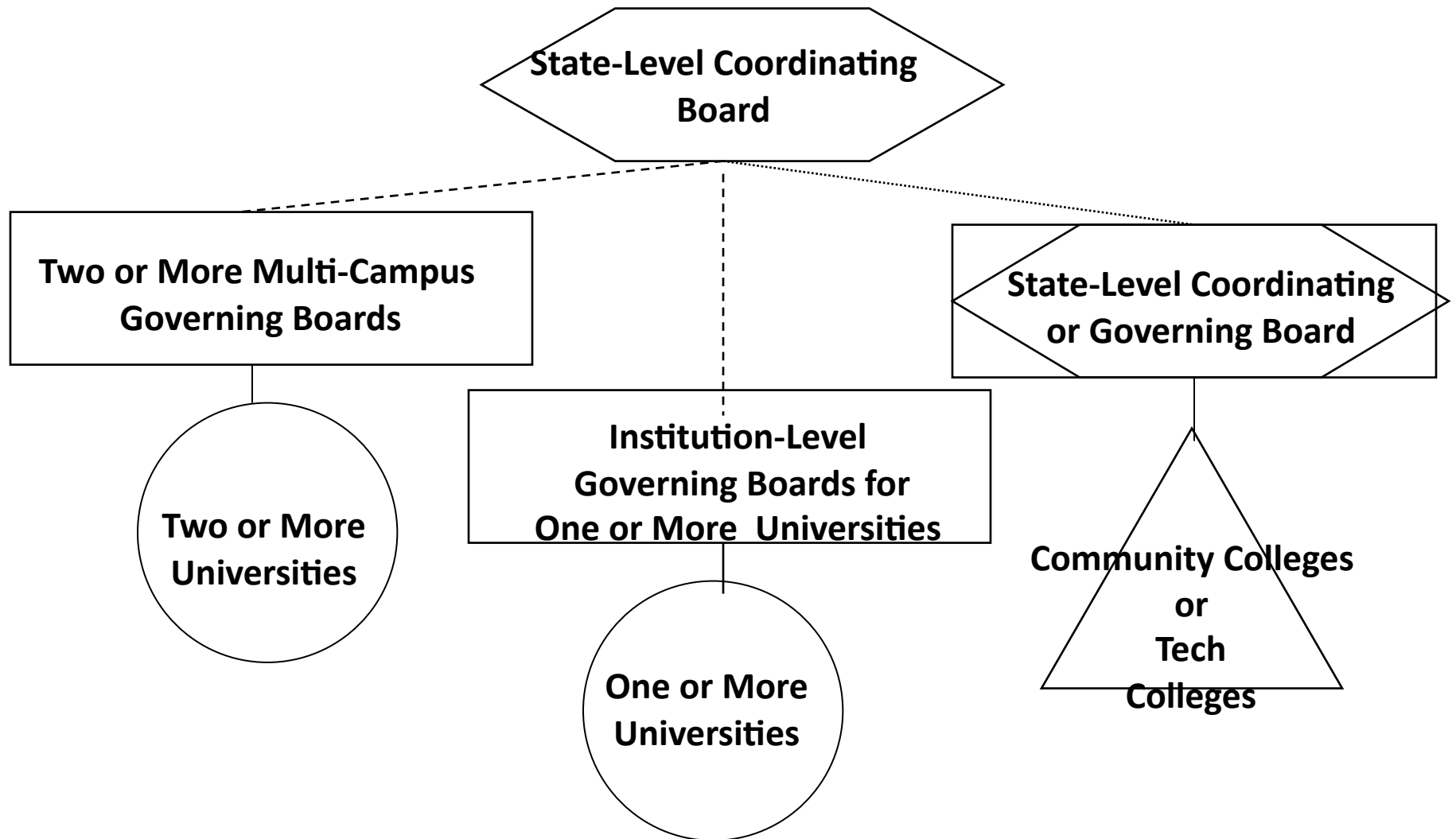
Note: Kentucky and Virginia community college boards are a statewide governing boards whereas the Washington State community college board is a coordinating board for locally governed colleges.

California and Connecticut



Explanation: Public institutions are organized under three state-level boards, one for research universities, one for comprehensive state universities, and the third a state-level governing board or a coordinating board for locally governed community colleges. Coordinating board has responsibility for planning and coordinating the system.

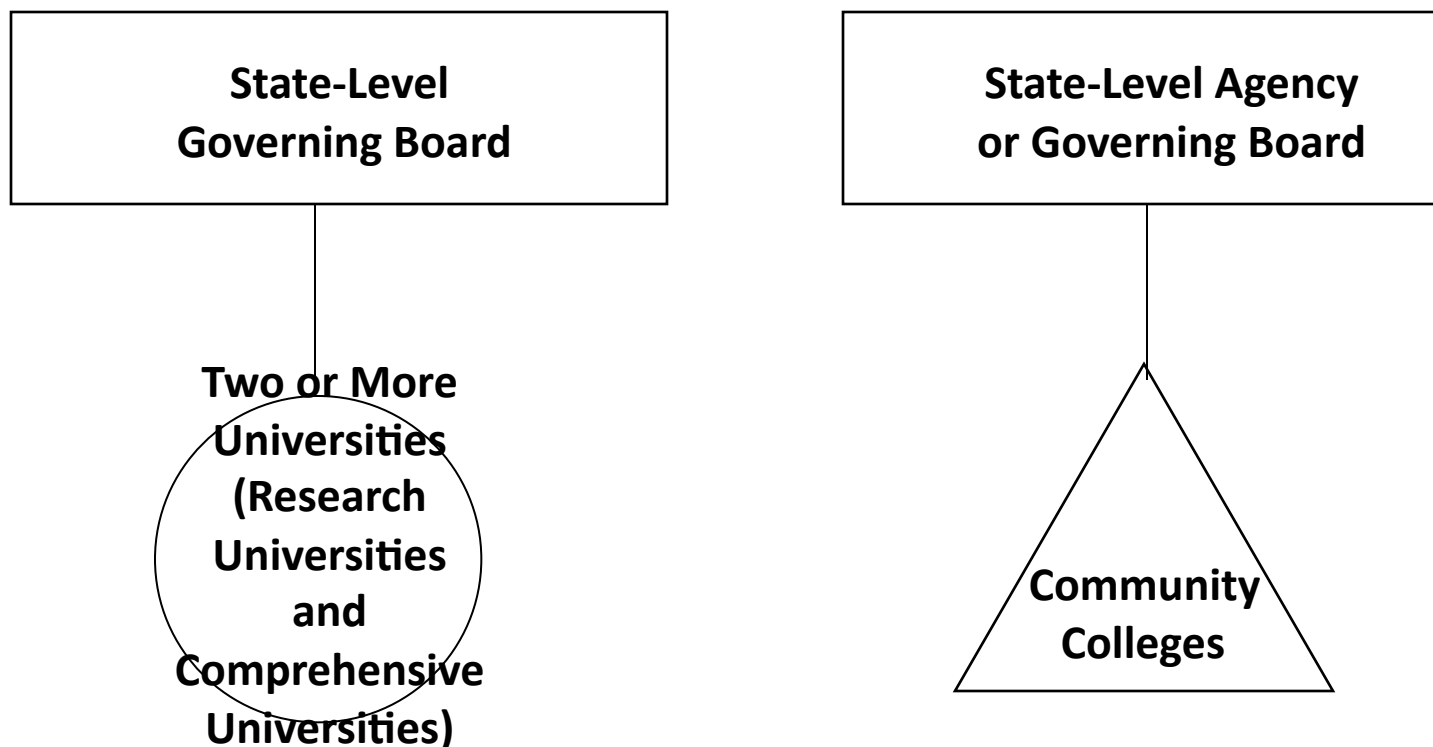
Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, South Carolina, Texas**



Explanation: Complex system of institutional governance including some multi-campus systems and some institutions with individual governing boards. State-Level board is responsible for coordinating the whole system. ****Note:** In Texas, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board serves as the coordinating entity for locally governed community colleges. TX public technical colleges are governed by system board.

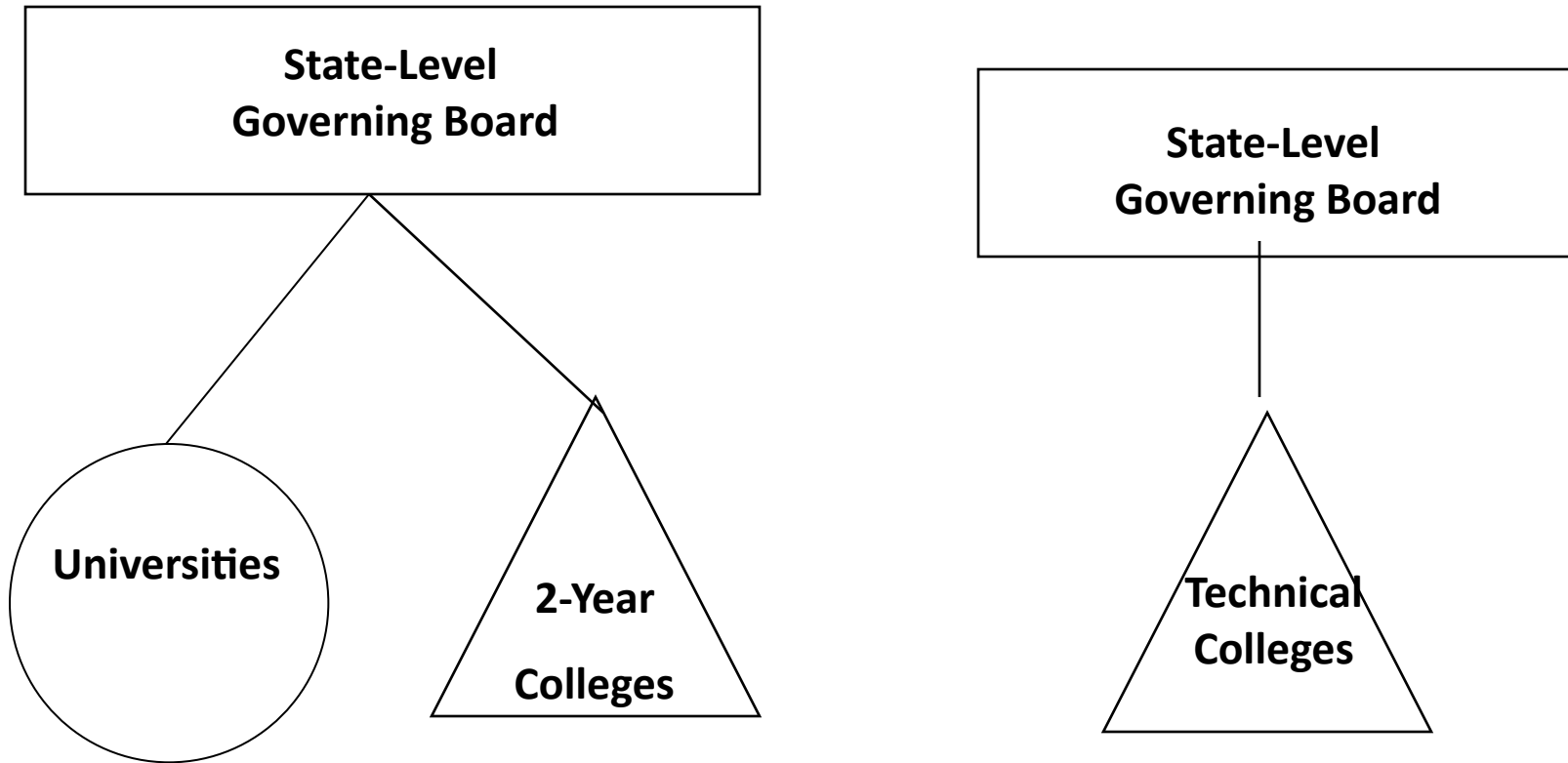
Governing Board States

Iowa, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Oregon



Explanation: Two separate state-level boards/agencies are responsible for all public institutions, one for universities and other for community or technical colleges. No state-level higher education planning or regulatory agency between boards and Governor and Legislature. Board for community or technical colleges may be either a state-level governing board (North Carolina) or a coordinating/regulatory board for locally governed colleges (Iowa and Oregon).

Georgia and Wisconsin



Explanation: Two separate boards govern public institutions, one board for the research university and other university campuses as well as 2-year (primarily transfer) colleges, and the other board for technical colleges.