

Governing Universities in Post-Soviet Countries

University governance is an essential but complex phenomenon, even in countries where institutional-level governance has a long and strong tradition. After the dissolution of the USSR, each of the fifteen former Soviet countries developed their own University governance system and this groundbreaking book explores how these countries evolved from the “common start” of a unified and tightly controlled higher education system to shaping their own paths in higher education. Each chapter explores a different country, allowing University governance models to be compared and contrasted. The countries provide examples of a variety of different governance models – *state-extended*, *academic-focused*, *internal/external*, and *external civic* – and the book highlights the advantages and disadvantages of each relative to their context. It also presents innovative frameworks for understanding governance effectiveness in terms of autonomy, competition, and capacity. It is essential reading for researchers, students, and policy makers. This title is also available as open access on Cambridge Core.

Peter D. Eckel is Senior Fellow and Director of Leadership Programs at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania. Notable publications include *Practical Wisdom: Thinking Differently about College and University Governance* (2018). He serves as a trustee at the University of La Verne in California and coleads the Penn Project on University Governance.

Governing Universities in Post-Soviet Countries endorsements

“As the Minister of Science and Higher Education, I can attest to the significance and novelty of this study that captures governance structures in all post-Soviet republics. This is complex and meaningful research that benefits greatly from consistency and its chosen comparative approach. The cases are well crafted, and analysis chapters capture conceptual insights that are often missing in governance literature. I certainly recommend this book to policymakers, researchers, university leaders, and practitioners seeking to deepen their understanding of complexities in governing today’s universities.”

Sayasat Nurbek, Minister of Science and Higher Education of the
Republic of Kazakhstan

“As a president of universities in two different countries, I know well the impact that board structure has on universities and their governance. This book is not only a thoughtful analysis of university governance in post-Soviet countries, but also a thought-provoking treatise on the evolution and transformation of higher education, which will be impactful for governance boards and university leaders in every state.”

Santa J. Ono, President, University of Michigan

“The conflict between Russia and Ukraine illustrates in stark detail the tensions among the different routes to modernization taken by the former Soviet states, and their universities are not immune to these challenges. In focusing on institutional governance, the authors have chosen an issue often ignored in policy reforms, but one that is essential. The authors provide a mechanism for understanding governance as well as for assessing the qualities and impact of university governance models in any country. Students of international higher education and policymakers alike will find much to learn and use in this well-researched and accessible work.”

Roberta Malee Bassett, Global Lead for Tertiary Education
and Senior Education Specialist, World Bank

“This book results from the largest natural experiment in the history of higher education, the dissolution of single system to systems in fifteen independent countries. Underlying this sudden process were two facts. No country was willing to leave the planned economic system the same as it was when the higher education system in the Soviet Union was created. And no country was willing to mirror their new higher education system with an imported model unaffected by local tradition, preference, and ambition. The results of these conflicting influences one can find in this unique volume of country-specific analyses.”

Stephen P. Heyneman, Professor Emeritus, International Education
Policy, Vanderbilt University

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From a Common Start, 1991–2021

Edited by

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