



# SHEEO

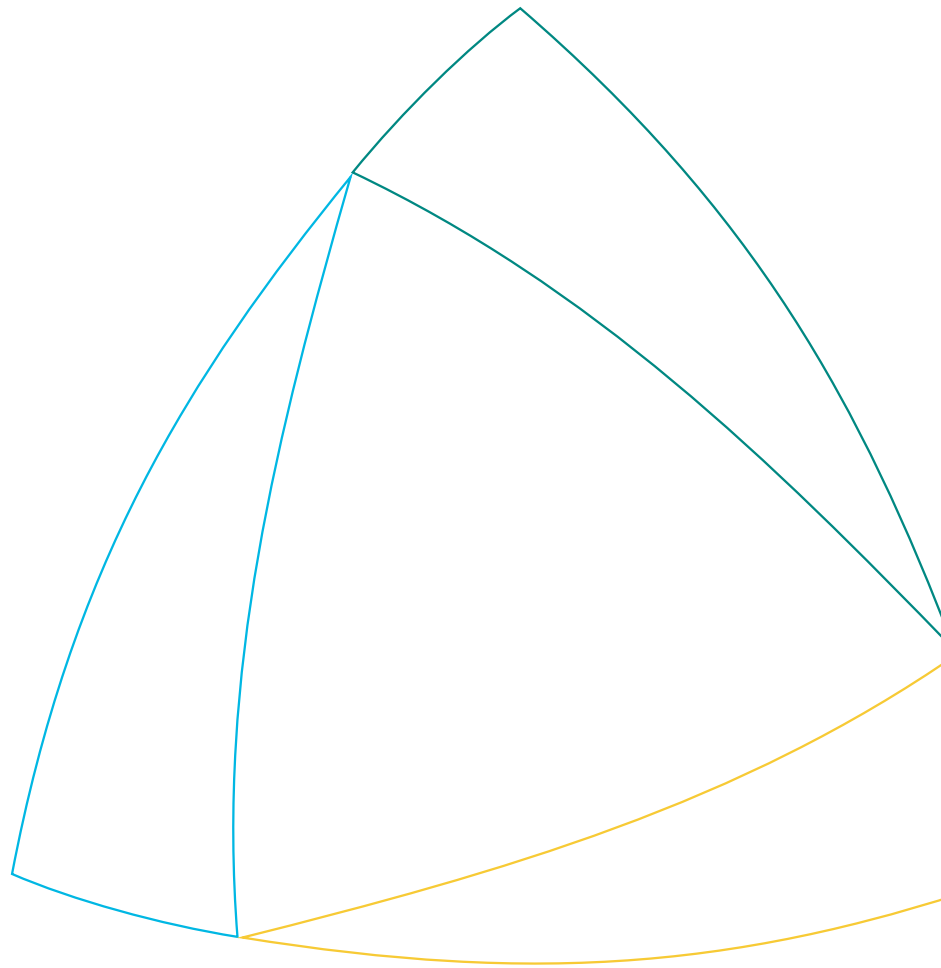
STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

## FY 2021

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report would not have been possible without additional support, particularly from SHEEO staff members Gloria Auer, Annahita Jimmerson, Sophia Laderman, John Lane, David Tandberg, and Dustin Weeden. SHEEO would like to thank our membership for taking the time to provide data and feedback for this report.

Aggregate and agency-level data from this publication are available on our website ([www.sheeo.org/project/sheeo-membership-report](http://www.sheeo.org/project/sheeo-membership-report)).

The data in the Membership Report and accompanying website may be freely used with the appropriate attribution and citation: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association. (2022). FY 2021 SHEEO Membership Report.

The State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) serves the executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education and their staffs. Founded in 1954, SHEEO promotes an environment that values higher education and its role in ensuring the equitable education of all Americans, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic factors. Together with its members, SHEEO aims to achieve this vision by equipping state higher education executive officers and their staffs with the tools to effectively advance the value of higher education, promoting public policies and academic practices that enable all Americans to achieve success in the 21st century, and serving as an advocate for state higher education leadership. For more information, visit [www.sheeo.org](http://www.sheeo.org).

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the fiscal year 2021 SHEEO Membership Report is to provide the SHEEO membership and the policy community with a variety of agency characteristics, including agency median budget, full-time equivalent staff including demographics, agency functions performed, senior leadership demographics; and SHEEO demographic, past employment, and education data.

SHEEO is a membership organization representing the executive officers of statewide governing and coordinating/policy boards charged with oversight and coordination of higher education statewide. The state higher education executive officer (SHEEO) is the senior-most person at a state higher education agency. SHEEO has 61 member agencies representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Some states have one SHEEO, and others have two. Fifty-five (90%) SHEEO members responded to the survey and submitted data for FY 2021.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Findings from the 2021 Membership Survey show that since 2020, coordinating/policy boards have seen an increase in full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, while governing boards have seen a decrease. All boards have seen an increase in median operating budgets. However, like in FY20, governing boards still have a higher median operating budget per FTE staff member than coordinating/policy boards.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, 13% of SHEEO agencies were forced to lay off staff in FY21 (7% coordinating/policy, 19% governing), and 15% furloughed staff (21% coordinating/policy, 8% governing). Forty-one percent of SHEEO agencies reported experiencing budget cuts due to the pandemic (39% coordinating/policy, 42% governing). SHEEO agencies also took on new functions, such as overseeing the disbursement of federal COVID-19 relief funds and coordinating public health activities across public higher education institutions.

Overall, SHEEO agencies are performing functions similar to those they performed in FY20, with increases in areas such as academic program approval and review. To better understand the increased functions year to year during pandemic conditions, SHEEO added 16 new functions to the Membership Survey. The most common function at coordinating/policy boards is maintaining, collecting, and reporting higher education data. All governing boards reported responsibility for communications and government relations, institutional accountability, and budgeting and fiscal policy analysis for higher education.

Coordinating/policy boards have a larger median operating budget than governing boards yet have the same amount of FTE staff (*Figure 2*). Coordinating/policy boards have a median of 60 FTE staff, an increase of 1 FTE since 2020. Governing boards' median FTE staff declined 4.0%, from 62.5 in 2020 to 60 in 2021. Since 2019, governing boards have experienced a 7.5% decline, from 64.5 FTE in 2019 to 60 FTE in 2021, whereas coordinating/policy boards have experienced an increase in FTE since 2019.<sup>1</sup> Despite several states reporting budget cuts due to

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1. While our surveys show a decrease in agency staff, further analysis reveals this is ultimately due to improved data collection, particularly with agencies previously not counting shared system staff.

the COVID-19 pandemic, coordinating/policy boards saw a \$748,000 increase in their median operating budgets in the last year and currently have a median \$11.5 million operating budget.<sup>2</sup> Governing boards saw a \$734,000 increase in median operating budgets, resulting in a median \$9.8 million operating budget.<sup>3</sup>

Regarding staff, we found that the representation of people of color employed at SHEEO agencies remains low, with 27% of all SHEEO agency staff being American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or multiracial. The remaining 72% are white (58%) or unknown, non-reporting, or vacant (UNRV) (14%).

The data primarily show disproportionately few people of color or those who identify as female in senior positions. While the majority of SHEEO agency staff are female, the majority of SHEEO agency leadership are male. Similarly, staff identifying as white are overrepresented in senior leadership, comprising 74% of senior leadership positions, compared to 58% of total SHEEO agency FTE staff.

The least diverse senior leadership positions by race and sex were financial officers, general counsel, development officers, and technology officers. The most diverse senior leadership position was equity and diversity officers. The data also show notable differences across SHEEO agency types. In coordinating/policy boards, seven senior leadership positions have 50% or more female representation, whereas there is only one position—communication officers—with more than half female representation in governing boards.

We found that the majority of SHEEOs have postsecondary education experience, and 45% of SHEEOs come directly from working in education policy/politics to the SHEEO position. SHEEOs at coordinating/policy boards were more likely to come from education policy/politics and less likely than those at governing boards to come directly from postsecondary education institutions and systems. American Indian or Alaska Native SHEEOs, Asian SHEEOs, Black or African American SHEEOs, and Hispanic or Latino SHEEOs were more likely than white SHEEOs to come from direct experience in education policy/politics or postsecondary education.

Over half (56%) of SHEEOs hold an earned doctorate or terminal degree equivalent, and SHEEOs earned their degrees in a range of fields such as public policy, education, and health-related fields. However, only white male SHEEOs have a bachelor's degree as their highest level of degree attainment, and only white SHEEOs have J.D.s. On the other hand, people of color all come to the SHEEO position with master's degrees, Ph.D.s, or Ed.D.s.

The leaders of SHEEO agencies (SHEEOs) were 73% white, and 53% were white males. These trends were stronger at governing boards, where 85% of SHEEOs were male, compared to 55% of coordinating/policy board SHEEOs. In FY21, all female leaders of governing boards were white, and only 23% of the male SHEEOs were American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or multiracial.



For additional details and state-specific data, see the Agency Profiles and data download at [sheeo.org/project/sheeo-membership-report](https://sheeo.org/project/sheeo-membership-report).

2. Budget figures are adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and are reported in constant fiscal year (July-June) 2021 dollars.
3. Across all agency types, budget increases were most likely due to clarifying definitions within the survey instrument, specifically expanding what should be included in agency budgets.

## INTRODUCTION

From 1966 to 2019, the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) administered the “Staffing and Salary Information with Survey of Agency Functions for Statewide Coordinating and Governing Higher Education Agencies,” more commonly known as the Salary Survey. Since its inception, the Salary Survey has been regularly updated to reflect the needs of the SHEEO membership. Until 2020, the data from the Salary Survey were kept internal, for SHEEO membership use only. In 2020, SHEEO began publicly publishing the non-salary components of the Salary Survey, now known as the SHEEO Membership Report.

The FY21 SHEEO Membership Report uses fiscal year 2021 data collected in the spring/early summer of 2021.<sup>4</sup> Fifty-five members completed the survey—a response rate of 90%. SHEEO was not able to collect data for one governing board (University of Vermont) and five coordinating/policy boards (District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent, Michigan Association of State Universities, Northern Marianas College, Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education, and the University of Vermont). The survey queried members to learn more about their operating budgets, functions, staffing, senior leadership, and SHEEOs. The FY21 survey was expanded from previous years to capture new data elements which enable us to better serve and understand our membership. The new elements include an expanded list of agency functions, function categories, and a section dedicated to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. SHEEO also collected demographic data to document the diversity of our member agencies’ staff.

This report reviews the survey findings across three levels: the SHEEO agency broadly, SHEEO agency leadership, and SHEEOs themselves. All three parts of the report focus on race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and sex composition. The SHEEO agency section will also summarize agency FTE staff, median operating budget, sources of funding, and functions performed, while the SHEEO senior leadership section highlights the demographics of executive-level staff, not including the SHEEO. The SHEEO section provides an in-depth look at the SHEEOs themselves, including demographics and prior job and education experience. The report concludes with a discussion of these data, the implications, and how these data can be used to improve SHEEO agencies. SHEEO agencies are under-researched, and we hope the report and accompanying data will contribute to and inspire more research on SHEEOs and SHEEO agencies.

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4. Data changes made after the data review deadline are not reflected in the narrative but will be reflected in the Agency Profiles ([www.sheeo.org/interactive-agency-profiles](http://www.sheeo.org/interactive-agency-profiles)) and data downloads.



## COVID-19 RESPONSE

*The pandemic prompted unprecedented responsibilities for SHEEO agencies. Member agencies began performing new job duties, routinely convened institutional leaders statewide to triage solutions, and aided the state in COVID-19 response measures while dealing with an abrupt transition to remote work and reduced budgetary and staff capacity. The FY21 Membership Survey included a section dedicated to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to understand its impact on SHEEO member agencies better. The questions focused on staff capacity management, including layoffs, furloughs, budget cuts, and new functions.*

*Only 13% of SHEEO agencies laid off staff in FY21, 7% of coordinating/policy board agencies and 19% of governing board agencies. Fifteen percent of SHEEO agencies furloughed staff (21% of coordinating/policy boards and 8% of governing boards). Of those that furloughed staff, only a quarter also laid off staff. Finally, 41% of SHEEO agencies reported budget cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One agency mentioned that reduced travel and operation costs helped offset their budget cuts. Thirty-nine percent of coordinating/policy board agencies and 42% of governing board agencies reported experiencing budget cuts. These budget cuts varied widely, ranging from less than 1% up to a 33% decrease.*

*Some of the biggest changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic were the new functions SHEEO agencies performed in response to the pandemic. Several SHEEO agencies were tasked with overseeing the disbursement and use of education-related federal COVID-19 relief funds. For example, one agency used CARES Act funds to cover accrued interest during a portion of student loan forbearance. Another newly performed job function for SHEEO agencies was coordinating public institutions' policies and protocols for the pandemic. Several agencies explained that they were responsible for coordinating the purchase of COVID-19 test kits and protective equipment; conducting employee, student, and public COVID-19 testing and vaccine clinics; coordinating/designing institution reopening plans; and tracking exposures and housing quarantines. Finally, agencies also aided their state governments by providing leadership and resources. One agency explained that some staff were redirected to help with the state's unemployment benefits program and serve as representatives on their governor's COVID-19 response group.*

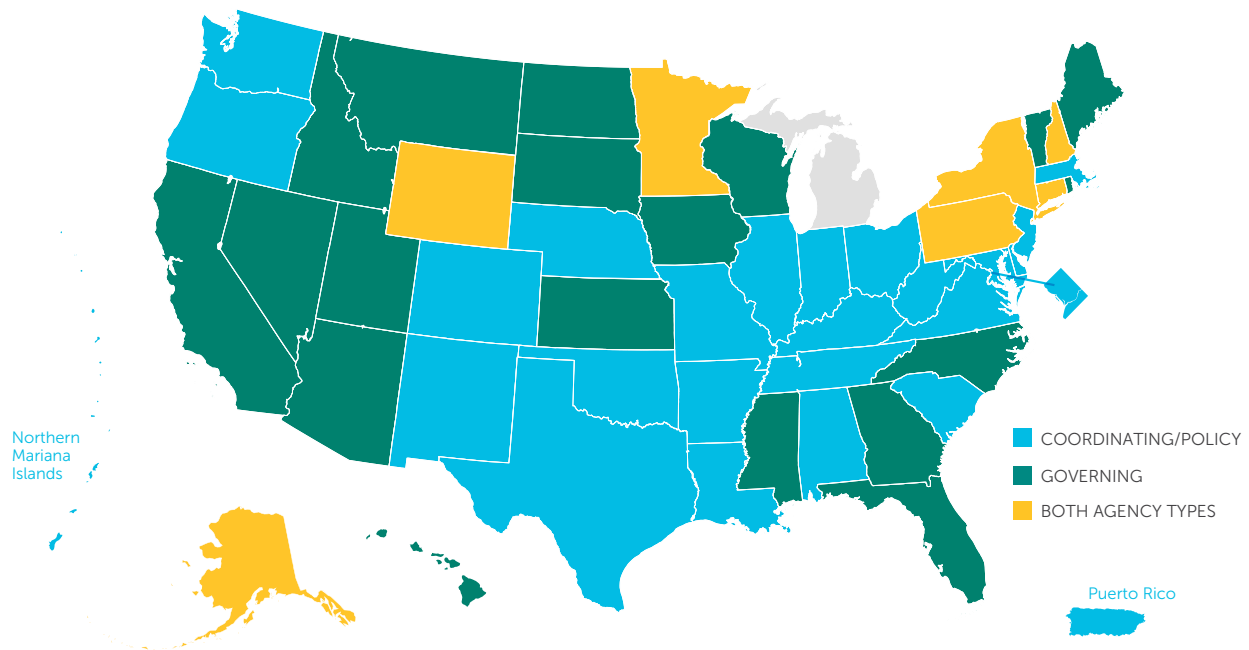
## THE SHEEO AGENCY

The SHEEO agency is the entity tasked with overseeing higher education in its state and is led by a state higher education executive officer (SHEEO).<sup>5</sup> Some states have multiple SHEEO agencies, but the majority have only one.<sup>6</sup> SHEEO agencies collaborate with various state offices, state policy leaders, business leaders, communities within their state, and higher education institutions. Levels of authority and functions are impacted by the SHEEO agency board type, who appoints the SHEEO and their board, and how the agency is situated within state law and context. SHEEO agencies can be described as either coordinating/policy boards or governing boards. Coordinating and policy boards tend to be state agencies or departments within a state agency that perform specific regulatory functions and resource-allocation functions and that can administer statewide grant and loan programs.<sup>7</sup> These boards tend not to have as much formal authority over institutions within the state but are tasked with coordinating the institutions of higher education and providing policy and research support for state leaders. On the other hand, governing boards are more likely to manage and oversee most functions of the higher education system and tend to have broad and more formal power over the institutions in their system. Governing boards play a more direct role in allocating resources, hiring and firing presidents, maintaining accountability, and participating in the academic planning process.

### MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION

In 2021, SHEEO's membership was comprised of 61 members representing all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands.<sup>8</sup> SHEEO is made up of 34 coordinating/policy boards and 27 governing boards (*Figure 1*). There appear to be some regional patterns regarding higher education governance within the SHEEO membership. The states west of Colorado tend to have more governing boards (except for Washington and Oregon), while parts of the Midwest and the Southeast have more coordinating/policy boards. The Northeast has several states with both types of governance structures. The SHEEO membership represents a variety of sectors, including four-year public, two-year public, and other (e.g., independent/nonprofit, proprietary, online, or specialty).

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5. Tandberg, D., Fowles, J., & McLendon, M. (2017). The governor and the state higher education executive officer: How the relationship shapes state financial support for higher education. *The Journal for Higher Education*, 88, 110-134.
  6. The state higher education executive officer, known as the SHEEO, is the senior-most person for public higher education in a state. States can have one SHEEO or multiple SHEEOs. The SHEEO can be appointed by the governor, a coordinating board, governing board, or a combination of entities.
  7. Lingenfelter, P., Novak, R., Legon, R. (2008). *Excellence at scale – What is required of public leadership and governance in higher education?* [https://www.paulelingenfelter.com/\\_files/ugd/f9b80b\\_b94b2c1def154529b4e1ba9abaa0b9c1.pdf](https://www.paulelingenfelter.com/_files/ugd/f9b80b_b94b2c1def154529b4e1ba9abaa0b9c1.pdf)
  8. In 2021, eight states had two SHEEO agency members: Alaska, Connecticut, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wyoming.

**FIGURE 1**
**SHEEO MEMBER GOVERNING AND COORDINATING/POLICY BOARDS, FY 2021**

**NOTES:**

1. The Michigan Association of State Universities is a member of SHEEO but is not technically a state governing or coordinating/policy board.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFF AND OPERATING BUDGET

SHEEO agencies vary in both size and resources. Generally, coordinating/policy boards have a larger median operating budget than governing boards yet have the same amount of FTE staff (*Figure 2*). Coordinating/policy boards have a median of 60 FTE staff, an increase of 1 FTE since 2020. Governing boards' median FTE staff declined 4.0%, from 62.5 in 2020 to 60 in 2021. Since 2019, governing boards have experienced a 7.5% decline, from 64.5 FTE in 2019 to 60 FTE in 2021, whereas coordinating/policy boards have experienced an increase in FTE since 2019.<sup>9</sup>

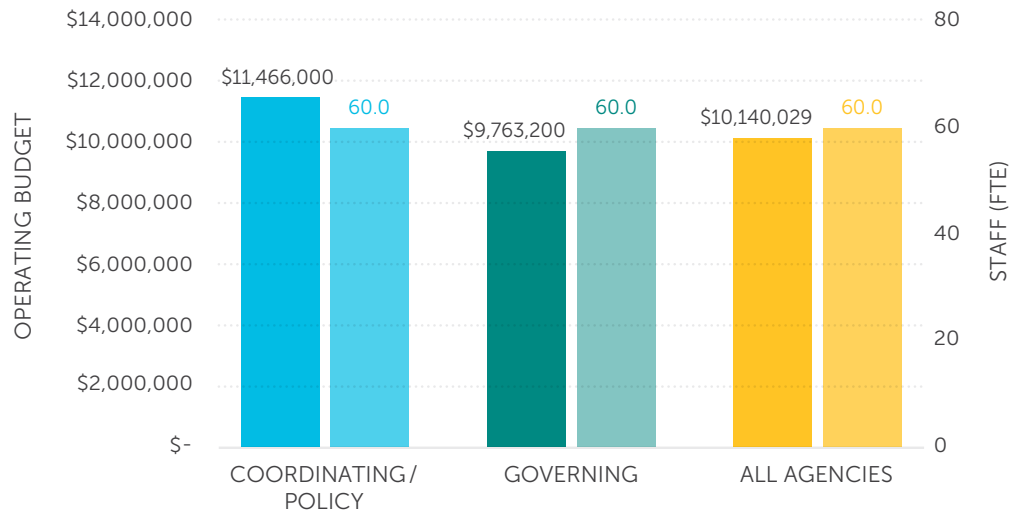
Despite several states reporting budget cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, coordinating/policy boards saw a \$748,000 increase in their median operating budgets in the last year and currently have a median \$11.5 million operating budget.<sup>10</sup> Governing boards saw a \$734,000 increase in median operating budgets, resulting in a median \$9.8 million operating budget.<sup>11</sup>

9. While our surveys show a decrease in agency staff, further analysis reveals this is ultimately due to improved data collection, particularly with agencies previously not counting shared system staff.

10. Budget figures are adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and are reported in constant fiscal year (July-June) 2021 dollars.

11. Across all agency types, budget increases were most likely due to clarifying definitions within the survey instrument, specifically expanding what should be included in agency budgets.

**FIGURE 2**  
**MEDIAN SHEEO AGENCY OPERATING BUDGET AND FTE STAFF, FY 2021**



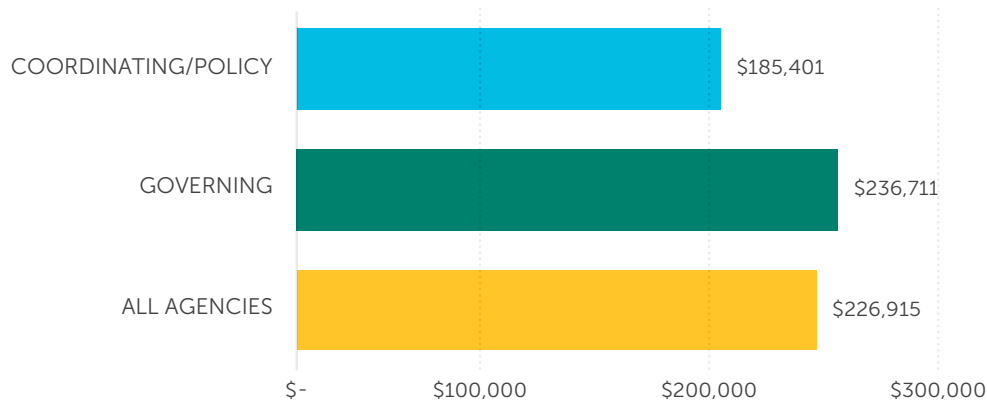
**NOTES:**

1. Agency operating budgets include state-, federal-, private-, and other-sourced funds, and exclude funding for institutional operations or financial aid awards to students or campuses.
2. Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff includes all staff paid out of the agency's operating budget.
3. One agency did not submit operating budget and agency staff (FTE) data and has been excluded from this figure.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

The difference in resources between coordinating/policy boards and governing boards can be further examined by weighting the operating budget by staff size. Doing this enables better comparison not skewed by variation in the average size of each type of board or by very small or very large agencies. In fact, *Figure 3* shows that, on average, coordinating/policy boards have 22% less funding per FTE than governing boards. This is primarily because there are a high number of coordinating boards with smaller per-FTE budgets: nearly half of coordinating boards (14) are funded at a rate of less than \$175,000 per FTE compared to only seven governing boards.

**FIGURE 3**  
**MEDIAN SHEEO AGENCY OPERATING BUDGET PER FTE STAFF, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

1. Agency operating budgets include state-, federal-, private-, and other-sourced funds, and exclude funding for institutional operations or financial aid awards to students or campuses.
2. Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff includes all staff paid out of the agency's operating budget.
3. One agency did not submit operating budget and agency staff (FTE) data and has been excluded from this figure.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

SHEEO agencies are funded through a variety of sources, whether from public or private entities (*Table 1*). A major part of their budgets (61.3%) comes from their respective states. However, there are variations among coordinating/policy boards and governing boards. While all boards are similarly reliant on state funding, a coordinating/policy board, on average, receives 25.5% of its budget from federal grants compared to only 5.5% at governing boards. On average, a governing board receives 29.4% of its budget from other funds, compared to 17.7% at coordinating/policy boards. Other funds primarily consist of licensing/administration fees, local funding, and shared/reimbursed activity from institutions. There was an increased reliance on federal funds and a decreased reliance on state funds for agency budgets for FY21, likely due to COVID relief funds. Compared to 2020, coordinating/policy boards saw a 7.5% increase and governing boards saw a 1.7% increase in proportion to federal funds of the total operating budget.

**TABLE 1**  
**BREAKDOWN OF AGENCY OPERATING BUDGETS, FY 2020-2021**

	STATE			FEDERAL			PRIVATE			OTHER		
	2020	2021	1-YEAR CHANGE	2020	2021	1-YEAR CHANGE	2020	2021	1-YEAR CHANGE	2020	2021	1-YEAR CHANGE
COORDINATING/POLICY	59.6%	54.7%	-5.0	17.9%	25.5%	7.5	2.1%	2.2%	0.1	20.3%	17.7%	-2.6
GOVERNING	67.0%	64.1%	-2.9	3.8%	5.5%	1.7	1.3%	1.0%	-0.2	28.0%	29.4%	1.4
ALL AGENCIES	64.7%	61.3%	-3.3	8.2%	11.3%	3.1	1.5%	1.4%	-0.2	25.6%	26.0%	0.0

**NOTES:**

1. Other funding primarily consists of licensing/administration fees, local funding, and shared/reimbursed activity.
2. Seven agencies did not submit agency operating budget breakdown data and have been excluded from this table.
3. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

It is important to remember that while all SHEEO agencies are tasked with the same purpose of overseeing higher education, the resources available to each SHEEO agency vary widely, even within similar governance structures, as seen in *Table 2*. For example, the smallest governing board, the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, has 13 FTE staff, while the largest governing board, The California State University, has 686.

Although median operating budgets for both board types are similar, governing boards with an operating budget above the median have wider variation and larger budgets. For example, the 75th percentile for coordinating/policy board budgets is roughly \$18 million, compared to \$58 million at governing boards. Meanwhile, coordinating/policy agencies have operating budgets ranging from below \$1M to \$55M.

**TABLE 2**  
**AGENCY BUDGET AND STAFF (FTE) MEAN, MEDIAN, AND PERCENTILES, FY 2021**

	OPERATING BUDGET			STAFF (FTE)		
	COORDINATING/ POLICY	GOVERNING	ALL AGENCIES	COORDINATING/ POLICY	GOVERNING	ALL AGENCIES
1%	\$858,487	\$2,351,014	\$858,487	2.0	13.0	2.0
5%	\$1,452,699	\$4,346,646	\$1,781,200	7.0	18.0	9.0
10%	\$1,781,200	\$5,077,795	\$3,882,800	9.0	22.0	18.0
25%	\$5,387,320	\$7,485,256	\$6,827,655	29.0	29.1	29.0
<b>50%</b>	<b>\$11,466,000</b>	<b>\$9,763,200</b>	<b>\$10,140,029</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>60.0</b>
75%	\$18,490,654	\$57,926,828	\$27,866,100	75.0	228.0	112.0
90%	\$36,681,928	\$121,195,792	\$60,535,500	217.0	534.0	329.7
95%	\$44,554,000	\$151,247,008	\$121,195,792	238.5	574.0	534.0
99%	\$55,389,452	\$262,126,960	\$262,126,960	297.0	686.0	686.0
MEAN	\$14,769,095	\$41,121,123	\$26,969,108	74.5	176.5	121.7

**NOTES:**

1. Agency operating budgets include state-, federal-, private-, and other-sourced funds, and exclude funding for institutional operations or financial aid awards to students or campuses.
2. Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff includes all staff paid out of the agency's operating budget.
3. One agency did not submit operating budget and agency staff (FTE) data and has been excluded from this figure.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

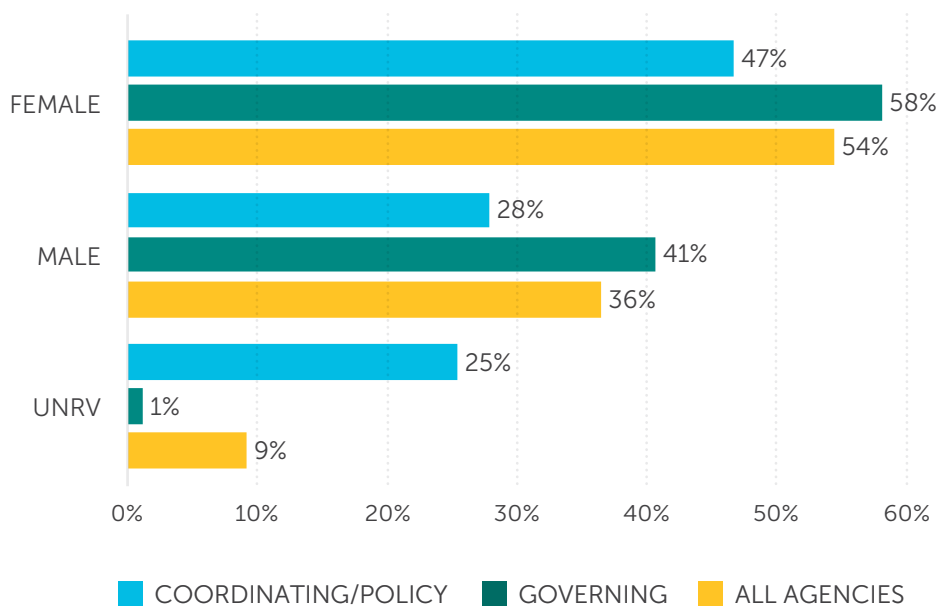
## SHEEO AGENCY DEMOGRAPHICS

One goal of collecting the membership data is to understand the demographic composition of SHEEO agency staff, including sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino origin. These agency data include senior-level staff and SHEEOs (which are broken out in later sections). These data may enable SHEEO members to critically reflect on the racial makeup in their offices and to begin thinking of solutions to further diversify their offices and create climates that support, affirm, and provide professional development for their staff members of color. From 2020 to 2021, there were decreases for the unknown/non-reporting/vacant (UNRV) category for sex and increases for

UNRV race. It is imperative to have more SHEEO agencies report sex,<sup>12</sup> race, and Hispanic origin data because it allows SHEEO to provide a clearer picture of its members' demographic makeup.

Fifty-four percent of SHEEO agency staff are female, 36% are male, and 9% are UNRV (Figure 4). Coordinating/policy boards had a much higher percentage of the UNRV sex category (25%) compared to governing boards (1%), indicating a potential difference in these agencies' ability to collect and/or share complete demographic data. Coordinating boards had a decrease from 28% UNRV to 25% UNRV, which coincided with a 3% increase from 25% of SHEEO agency FTEs identifying as male in 2020 to 28% in 2021. Due to a high percentage of missing or non-reported data, readers should use caution when interpreting the demographic differences at coordinating/policy boards. Additionally, governing boards reported 1% UNRV, a decrease of 1% from FY20, with males in governing boards experiencing a 1% decrease from 42% in 2020 to 41% in 2021. In both cases, the decline in UNRV corresponded to a proportional increase in reported male staff.

**FIGURE 4**  
**SEX COMPOSITION OF AGENCY STAFF, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

- Four agencies did not submit agency staff (FTE) by sex and have been excluded from this figure.
- UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.
- Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

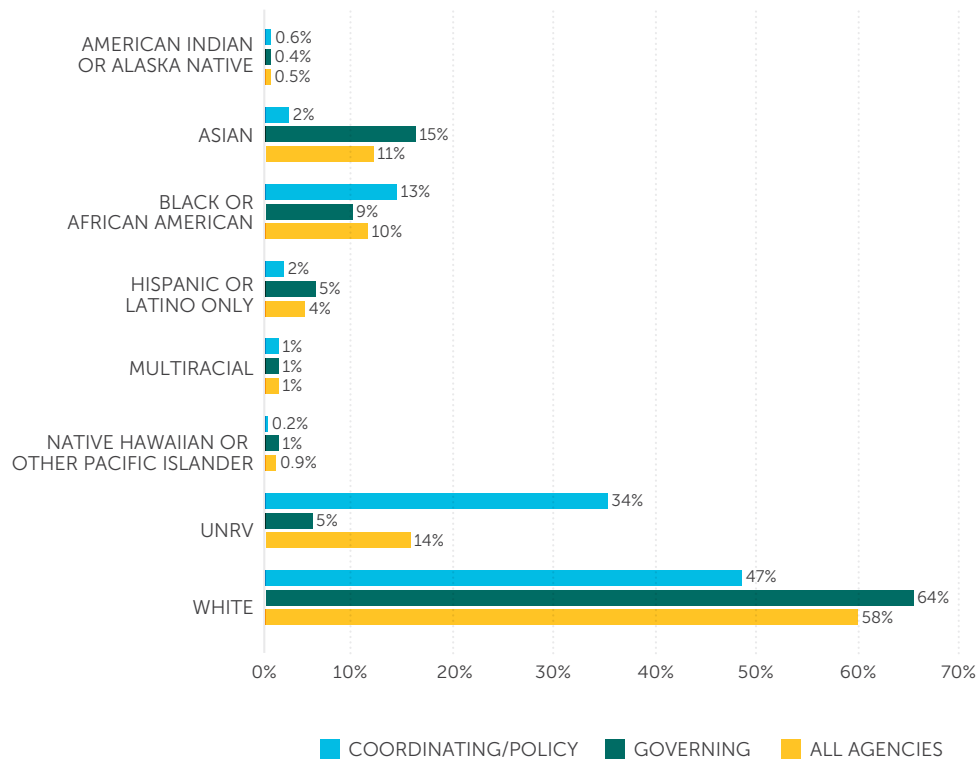
**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

For all SHEEO agency FTEs, 0.5% identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, 11% identified as Asian, 10% identified as Black or African American, 1% identified as multiracial, 0.9% identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 14% had UNRV as race, and 58% identified as white. Five percent of SHEEO agency staff are Hispanic or Latino. When separated by coordinating/policy boards and governing boards, there were slight differences in racial composition. Coordinating/

12. The 2021 Membership Survey asked for sex instead of gender. SHEEO staff understand that there are limitations with measuring sex instead of gender identity. SHEEO will not use sex and gender, female and woman, and male and man interchangeably in this paper.

policy boards were made up of 13% Black or African American people and 0.6% American Indian or Alaska Native people, compared to governing boards, which had 9% Black or African American people and 0.4% American Indian or Alaska Native people. These data can be seen in *Figure 5*. However, governing boards saw more representation of Asian, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander people. Governing boards had 15% Asian staff, 6% Hispanic or Latino staff, and 1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander staff, while coordinating/policy boards had 2% Asian staff, 2% Hispanic or Latino staff, and .2% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander staff. The demographic differences may be due to coordinating/policy boards reporting 34% of their staff as UNRV race or ethnicity, an increase of 5% from 2020, compared to governing boards' 5% UNRV. Due to a high percentage of missing or non-reported data, readers should use caution when interpreting the demographic differences at coordinating/policy boards.

**FIGURE 5**  
**RACE COMPOSITION OF AGENCY STAFF, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

- Five agencies did not submit agency staff (FTE) by race and have been excluded from this figure.
- UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.
- Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association



## AGENCY FUNCTIONS

SHEEO agencies perform a wide range of functions to oversee higher education in their respective states, a primary distinction between governing and coordinating/policy boards. For instance, coordinating/policy boards are much more likely to grant authority for awarding degrees or operating authority to private institutions and administer state student loan and grant programs. Comparatively, governing boards are more likely to conduct presidential searches and evaluations, approve presidential compensation, provide legal services for institutions, and oversee contracts, tenure decisions, and personnel policies for institutions. Some of the most common functions across all agencies include collecting, maintaining, and reporting data on higher education; academic program approval; and academic planning.

The primary functions of a SHEEO agency evolve as agencies change their missions and respond to changing priorities in their state. In 2021, SHEEO expanded the list of agency functions to better reflect the work SHEEO members perform. SHEEO added 16 functions to the survey—tagged *NEW* in the tables—and sorted the functions into five categories: academic affairs; communications, coordination and planning; institutional oversight and reporting; staffing and personnel; and state budgetary and fiscal policy.<sup>13</sup>

## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

SHEEO agencies are heavily involved in academic affairs. More than three-quarters perform academic planning, program approval, and program review functions (*Table 3.1*). With their more formalized powers, governing boards tend to have greater involvement as they are often trying to balance programming across a system. This difference is most evident with 81% of governing boards managing and operating academic policies and programs compared to 46% of coordinating boards.

TABLE 3.1

### ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FUNCTIONS OF SHEEO AGENCIES, FY 2021

		C/P	GOV	ALL
	ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW	75%	88%	81%
	ACADEMIC PROGRAM APPROVAL	86%	96%	91%
	ACADEMIC PLANNING	86%	96%	91%
NEW	DEGREE AND CREDENTIAL APPROVAL/AWARD	54%	81%	67%
NEW	MANAGE AND OPERATE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMS	46%	81%	63%

SOURCE: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

13. One agency did not submit agency function data and has been excluded from the data tables in this section.

## COMMUNICATIONS, COORDINATION, AND PLANNING

Eighty-nine percent of SHEEO agencies are responsible for communications and government relations for higher education and state-level coordination (*Table 3.2*). These types of functions can be performed across state government departments, higher education sectors, and/or the individual institutions of higher education for which a SHEEO agency is responsible. In FY21, there were only four communications, coordinating, and planning functions that coordinating/policy boards performed more than governing boards: coordination with departments of labor, workforce, and/or economic development; coordination with state K-12 activities; management/approval of interstate compacts and reciprocity agreements; and state-level planning. Three of these functions tend to focus on policy areas beyond state higher education, suggesting that this type of interagency coordination among state government falls more to coordinating boards.

There are three communications, coordinating, and planning functions that fewer than half of SHEEO-member agencies performed: legal services for institutions, manage/operate programs for equity and diversity, and operation/coordination of distance learning activities. While all three of these tasks could very well operate at the institution level, major events like the COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide focus on racial justice could cause more SHEEO agencies to adopt functions like managing equity and diversity programs and coordination of distance learning activities.

*TABLE 3.2*  
**COMMUNICATIONS, COORDINATION, AND PLANNING FUNCTIONS OF SHEEO AGENCIES, FY 2021**

		C/P	GOV	ALL
	COMMUNICATIONS AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION	79%	100%	89%
	COORDINATION WITH DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, WORKFORCE, AND/OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	86%	81%	83%
	COORDINATION WITH STATE K-12 ACTIVITIES	86%	69%	78%
NEW	FEDERAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	61%	73%	67%
	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COORDINATION	29%	85%	56%
	LEGAL SERVICES FOR INSTITUTIONS	7%	77%	41%
	MANAGE/APPROVE INTERSTATE COMPACTS AND RECIPROCIITY AGREEMENTS	64%	62%	63%
NEW	MANAGE/OPERATE PROGRAMS FOR COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS	71%	77%	74%
	MANAGE/OPERATE PROGRAMS FOR EQUITY AND DIVERSITY	39%	58%	48%
	MASS COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC REGARDING STATE HIGHER EDUCATION AGENDA	79%	88%	83%
	OPERATION/COORDINATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING ACTIVITIES	39%	58%	48%
	STATE-LEVEL COORDINATION	86%	92%	89%
	STATE-LEVEL PLANNING	75%	69%	72%
NEW	SERVE AS AN ADVISOR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION LEADERS	68%	88%	78%
NEW	SERVE AS AN ADVISOR TO AND RESPOND TO REQUESTS FROM STATE POLICY LEADERS	79%	92%	85%

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## INSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING

One of the main responsibilities charged to SHEEO agencies is to provide oversight of the institutions they govern and coordinate. One way they do this is by collecting, analyzing, and reporting key data. Apart from authority-granting powers to private institutions, *Table 3.3* shows that governing boards often perform more oversight and reporting functions than coordinating/policy boards. Nearly all member governing boards are expected to collect and report data, generate accountability metrics on a variety of factors, and further hold institutions accountable to the standards set by the state. While 89% of coordinating/policy boards collect, manage, and report data, only 50% have the authority to hold institutions accountable.

**TABLE 3.3**  
**INSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING FUNCTIONS OF SHEEO AGENCIES, FY 2021**

		C/P	GOV	ALL
NEW	ADOPT RULES TO REGULATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION	75%	85%	80%
	APPROVAL OF NEW PUBLIC CAMPUSES	64%	62%	63%
	GRANTING AUTHORITY FOR AWARDED DEGREES OR OPERATING AUTHORITY TO PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	64%	31%	48%
	INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY	50%	100%	74%
NEW	INSTITUTIONAL MISSION APPROVAL	39%	81%	59%
	MAINTAINING, COLLECTING, COORDINATING, AND REPORTING DATA ON HIGHER EDUCATION	89%	96%	93%
NEW	MANAGE AND REPORT ON ACCOUNTABILITY OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES	75%	96%	85%
	MERGERS, CONSOLIDATIONS, AND/OR CLOSURES	57%	69%	63%
NEW	OVERSEE NON-RESIDENT ENROLLMENT CAPS	11%	42%	26%

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## STAFFING AND PERSONNEL

In addition to supporting and managing their own staff, SHEEO agencies can be charged with personnel matters of institutions. More than any other function category, governing boards overwhelmingly perform staffing and personnel functions compared to coordinating/policy boards, as seen in *Table 3.4*. A distinguishing factor of governing boards is their oversight of presidents, including evaluations, searches, and compensation approval. All SHEEO governing board members reported that they perform at least two of the three president-related functions.

*TABLE 3.4*  
**STAFFING AND PERSONNEL MATTERS FUNCTIONS OF SHEEO AGENCIES, FY 2021**

		C/P	GOV	ALL
	COLLECTIVE BARGAINING	7%	58%	31%
	CONTRACTS, TENURE DECISIONS, PERSONNEL POLICIES FOR INSTITUTIONS	4%	73%	37%
NEW	HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION FOR INSTITUTIONS	0%	65%	31%
NEW	PRESIDENTIAL COMPENSATION APPROVAL	4%	96%	48%
	PRESIDENTIAL EVALUATIONS	4%	96%	48%
	PRESIDENT SEARCHES	4%	96%	48%
	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR BOARD MEMBERS	43%	77%	59%

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## STATE BUDGETARY AND FISCAL POLICY

As seen in *Table 3.5*, SHEEO agencies are expected to help manage and invest state resources in higher education in support of their missions. Many agencies (85%) perform budgeting and fiscal policy analysis for higher education, and all but one will submit consolidated budget recommendations to the governor and/or legislature. When it comes to higher education infrastructure, two-thirds of SHEEO agencies are involved in the capital project approval process, 61% with the capital funding approval process, 59% with capital planning, and 44% with capital project implementation. While governing boards are more often expected to engage in most budgetary and fiscal work, coordinating/policy boards are more likely to administer student grant and loan programs.

**TABLE 3.5**  
**STATE BUDGETARY AND FISCAL POLICY FUNCTIONS OF SHEEO AGENCIES, FY 2021**

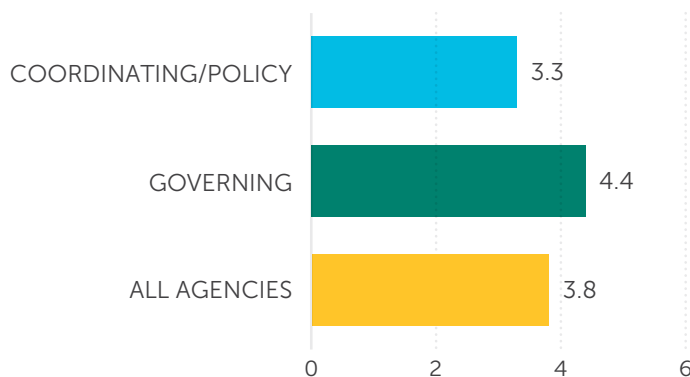
		C/P	GOV	ALL
	ADMINISTRATION OF STUDENT GRANT PROGRAMS	86%	54%	70%
	ADMINISTRATION OF STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS	50%	31%	41%
	ALLOCATION OF STATE HIGHER EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS TO INSTITUTIONS	54%	81%	67%
NEW	APPROVE OR ADMINISTER INSTITUTIONAL BONDS	21%	81%	50%
	AUDITING INSTITUTIONAL EXPENDITURES AND COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW	21%	85%	52%
	BUDGETING AND FISCAL POLICY ANALYSIS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION	71%	100%	85%
NEW	CAPITAL PROJECT APPROVAL	46%	88%	67%
NEW	CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING APPROVAL	39%	85%	61%
	CAPITAL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	14%	77%	44%
	CAPITAL PROJECT PLANNING	36%	85%	59%
	GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	68%	62%	65%
NEW	OVERSEE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR TUITION PURPOSES	11%	62%	35%
	SUBMISSION OF CONSOLIDATED HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND/OR LEGISLATURE	79%	85%	81%
	TUITION-SETTING AUTHORITY	25%	88%	56%

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## AGENCY STAFF AND FUNCTIONS PERFORMED

The number of FTEs per function is a rough measure of efficiency and capacity. While it is impossible to give an ideal staff-to-function ratio, large declines in this measure can signal a potentially unsustainable increase in staff workload. These data can be seen in *Figure 6*. It appears that coordinating/policy boards have slightly fewer staff per function compared to governing boards. Coordinating/policy boards had 3.3 FTEs per function in 2021, while governing boards had 4.4 FTEs. Of course, all functions are not equal, and some are much more time intensive than others. Due to the newly added and removed functions in this year's survey, SHEEO recommends that FY21 aggregate functions should not be compared to FY20.

**FIGURE 6**  
**AVERAGE STAFF (FTE) PER FUNCTION, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

1. Staff (FTE) includes all staff paid out of agency operating budget.
2. Two agencies did not submit agency staff (FTE) and/or function data and have been excluded from this figure.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

The primary functions for both coordinating/policy and governing boards have changed slightly with academic program review and academic program approval becoming some of the most performed functions, while maintaining, collecting, coordinating, and reporting data on higher education is still the number one performed function. Notably, while the least-performed functions are often carried out by governing boards, these functions are typically performed on the institutions' behalf, such as overseeing non-resident enrollment caps, residency requirements for tuition purposes, and human resources administration for institutions.

## SHEEO SENIOR LEADERSHIP

In contrast to the prior sections of this report, which focused on the composition of SHEEO agencies and their entire staff, this section focuses specifically on senior leadership at SHEEO member agencies (e.g., vice presidents and vice chancellors). Additionally, these data show how senior leadership is defined at SHEEO agencies, thus providing opportunities for SHEEO agencies to learn from one another and better understand their areas for growth and how they compare to their peer agencies in higher education. If agencies are looking to redesign their staffing structures, or if an agency is changing its mission or merging with another agency, the senior leadership data will allow agencies to examine other agencies' structures to consider how best to redesign their senior leadership while also allowing them to reassess their functions and goals. Additionally, these data can provide a more accurate lens of comparison for SHEEO agencies—the data can be used to see which SHEEO agencies have similar leadership structures and titles and allow agencies to better evaluate their capacity when adopting new policies or pursuing governance/staff changes.

In order to provide a better view of the makeup of senior leaders within its membership, SHEEO collected race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and sex data for all senior-level staff at member agencies. These data allow for a more in-depth look at the demographic makeup of decision-makers at SHEEO agencies. The data primarily show disproportionately few people of color or those who identify as female in senior positions.

For the FY21 Membership Survey, the information officer position was replaced with two new positions: research officer and technology officer. This was done to provide a more accurate depiction of senior leadership roles and responsibilities. In FY21, there are 326 senior leaders across the 55 surveyed SHEEO membership agencies.

### OVERVIEW OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Survey respondents provided details on nine senior leadership roles across their agencies, not including the SHEEO position. The data for the SHEEOs are provided in the next section. SHEEO agency senior leadership staff are expected to wear many hats; often, one staff member is charged with the responsibilities of more than one position. This report opts to count individual staff multiple times (per role) and the accompanying data downloads available on our website ([sheeo.org/project/sheeo-membership-report](https://sheeo.org/project/sheeo-membership-report)) list repeating agency staff titles in these cases. The most common leadership positions, shared by almost all SHEEO agencies, are financial officer (98%), academic officer (94%), and communications officer (87%). The least common positions across all agencies are equity and diversity officer (49%) and development officer<sup>14</sup> (15%). There are noticeable differences across coordinating/policy boards and governing boards. Coordinating/policy boards are more likely to have a research officer or equity and diversity officer, whereas governing boards are more likely to have general counsel and a development officer (*Table 4*).

From FY20 to FY21, there were minor changes in the number of senior leadership positions across the SHEEO membership. There were declines in the number of communications officers (-3), development officers (-1), and government relations officers (-1). Positions that experienced increases were the equity and diversity officers (+4) and general counsels (+1).

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14. A development officer is charged with leading the agency's advancement and fundraising.

**TABLE 4**  
**SENIOR LEADERSHIP IN SHEEO AGENCIES, FY 2021**

SENIOR LEVEL STAFF	COORDINATING/ POLICY	GOVERNING	ALL AGENCIES
ACADEMIC OFFICER	93%	96%	94%
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER	81%	92%	87%
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER	4%	27%	15%
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY OFFICER	52%	46%	49%
FINANCIAL OFFICER	96%	100%	98%
GENERAL COUNSEL	52%	92%	72%
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICER	78%	73%	75%
RESEARCH OFFICER	56%	50%	53%
TECHNOLOGY OFFICER	70%	73%	72%

**NOTES:**

1. Two agencies did not submit senior-level staff data and have been excluded from this table.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP DEMOGRAPHICS

In FY21, there were several changes to the demographic makeup of senior leaders in SHEEO agencies. Overall, senior leadership FTE increased from FY20 due to retiring the category “information officer” and replacing it with two categories, “research officer” and “technology officer,” so any comparisons will be based on percentages. As is evident in *Table 5*, SHEEO agency senior leadership lacks representation of those who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native (0.3%), Asian (1.8%), Black or African American (10.7%), Hispanic or Latino (5.2%), multiracial (0.6%), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander people (0.3%). Excluding the SHEEO position (discussed in the following section), American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander people are only represented once, in a single agency’s equity and diversity officer position. The position with the highest representation of people of color was the equity and diversity officer (69.2%), while all other senior leadership positions had 29% or fewer people of color.

The number of senior leaders increased for all races except for Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander people. However, when looking at the percentage of senior leaders, the only race and ethnicity groups to experience a percentage increase between FY20 and FY21 were American Indian or Alaska Native people from 0% to 0.3%, Hispanic or Latino people from 3.3% to 5.5%, and multiracial people from 0% to 0.6%.

Racial representation is generally similar across senior leadership and all agency staff, with the exception of Asian staff, who have higher representation across all staff (11%) compared to in senior leadership (1.8%), and white people comprise 74% of senior leadership positions but make up 58% of total SHEEO agency FTE staff. Black or African American people make up 11% of senior leadership positions, a slight increase from the 10% of Black or African American people in SHEEO agencies. There is also a higher percentage of unknown, non-reporting or vacant race reported



for all agency staff (14%) compared to senior leadership (7%). Encouraging SHEEO agencies to submit race demographic breakdowns for their entire agency staff can reveal more complete analyses.

There were some notable racial and ethnic differences across board type for senior leadership. There are no Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander people in a senior leadership position in coordinating/policy boards, and there are no American Indian or Alaska Native people or multiracial people in senior leadership positions in governing boards. Sixty-seven percent of Asian senior leaders and 63% of Black or African American senior leaders are at coordinating/policy boards, whereas 58% of Hispanic or Latino senior leaders and 56% of white senior leaders are in governing boards.

**TABLE 5**  
**RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP, FY 2021**

	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	MULTIRACIAL	MULTIRACIAL LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	UNRV	WHITE	TOTAL
ACADEMIC OFFICER	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	78.0%	100.0%
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	89.1%	100.0%
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	100.0%
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY OFFICER	3.8%	0.0%	50.0%	7.7%	3.8%	3.8%	0.0%	15.4%	15.4%	100.0%
FINANCIAL OFFICER	0.0%	1.9%	7.7%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	5.8%	78.8%	100.0%
GENERAL COUNSEL	0.0%	2.6%	7.9%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.9%	78.9%	100.0%
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICER	0.0%	2.5%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%	80.0%	100.0%
RESEARCH OFFICER	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	89.3%	100.0%
TECHNOLOGY OFFICER	0.0%	7.9%	13.2%	7.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	60.5%	100.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**NOTES:**

1. Two agencies did not submit senior-level staff data and have been excluded from this table.
2. UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.
3. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

FY21 saw a more balanced distribution between male and female senior staff compared to FY20 (Table 6). Fifty percent of senior leadership identify as male (down 2% from last year), compared to 47% female (up 3%) and 3% UNRV (down 1%). In fact, there were five senior leadership positions that had 50% or more females compared to two senior leadership positions—academic officer and communications officer—in FY20. These positions are communications officer (63% female), academic officer (56%), research officer (54%), equity and diversity officer (54%), and government relations officer (50%). By comparison, development officer (75% male), financial officer (67%), technology officer (63%), and general counsel (55%) are the positions with the most male representation.

When looking at SHEEO agency FTE staff, 54% of SHEEO agency staff identify as female, while 37% identify as male. This means that while the majority of SHEEO agency staff are female, the majority of SHEEO agency leadership are male. Female senior leaders are underrepresented (47%) compared to female agency staff at any level (54%). Comparatively, 3% of senior leadership is reported as UNRV sex compared to 9% of agency staff. Staff breakdowns by sex are reported more than race to SHEEO’s Membership Survey, suggesting a collection and/or reporting barrier difference between the two demographics. Regardless, the commitment from SHEEO agencies to provide senior leadership demographics allows for greater transparency regarding representation.

Similar to race, there are several differences between male and female representation across board type, including large differences between individual senior leadership roles and the total senior staff. Fifty-six percent of female senior leaders work at coordinating/policy boards, whereas 58% of male senior leaders work in governing boards. There are seven senior leadership positions in coordinating/policy boards that have 50% or more females in the position, whereas there is only one (academic officer) in governing boards. Governing boards have more than a third less representation of females in the communication and technology officer roles than coordinating boards.

**TABLE 6**  
**SEX OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP, FY 2021**

	FEMALE	MALE	UNRV	TOTAL
ACADEMIC OFFICER	56.0%	44.0%	0.0%	100.0%
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER	63.0%	37.0%	0.0%	100.0%
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY OFFICER	53.8%	38.5%	7.7%	100.0%
FINANCIAL OFFICER	30.8%	67.3%	1.9%	100.0%
GENERAL COUNSEL	42.1%	55.3%	2.6%	100.0%
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICER	50.0%	45.0%	5.0%	100.0%
RESEARCH OFFICER	53.6%	42.9%	3.6%	100.0%
TECHNOLOGY OFFICER	34.2%	63.2%	2.6%	100.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.9%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**NOTES:**

1. Two agencies did not submit senior-level staff data and have been excluded from this table.
2. UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.
3. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

Table 7 shows the numeric count of senior leadership by race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and sex in FY21. Several groups of senior leadership positions experienced increases from FY20 to FY21. With the addition of two new senior leadership positions—technology officer and research officer—there were general increases across the board, but these new senior leaders were consistent with the race and sex composition of senior leadership overall. The two largest changes to the membership’s senior leadership composition were white females and Hispanic or Latino males, which both saw a 1.5 percentage point increase.<sup>15</sup> Other groups that saw increases include Hispanic or Latina females (1.2), multiracial females (0.6), American Indian or Alaska Native males (0.3), Asian males (0.3), and Black or African American females (0.3). Black or African American males and white males were the only two groups that experienced decreases, at 0.9 percentage points each.

**TABLE 7**  
**RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN, AND SEX OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP, FY 2021**

	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE			ASIAN			BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN			HISPANIC OR LATINO			MULTI-RACIAL			MULTI-RACIAL LATINO			NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER			UNRV			WHITE			TOTAL
	F	M	U	F	M	U	F	M	U	F	M	U	F	M	U	F	F	M	U	F	M	U	F	M	U	F	M	
ACADEMIC OFFICER	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	21	18	0	50		
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	26	15	0	46		
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	8		
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY OFFICER	0	1	0	0	0	0	8	5	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	3	0	26		
FINANCIAL OFFICER	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	14	27	0	52		
GENERAL COUNSEL	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	11	19	0	38		
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICER	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	16	15	1	40		
RESEARCH OFFICER	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	13	12	0	28		
TECHNOLOGY OFFICER	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	6	16	1	38		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>326</b>		

**NOTES:**

- Two agencies did not submit senior-level staff data and have been excluded from this table.
- F = Female; M = Male; U = UNRV
- UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

15. Most of the growth of Hispanic or Latino males can be attributed to one SHEEO member agency.

## THE SHEEO

SHEEOs are appointed by a variety of boards and public officials, and their appointment process can have important implications for how the SHEEO agency operates within the state and their role in the policy process (*Table 8*). Twenty-six SHEEOs are solely appointed by a governing board, 14 are solely appointed by a coordinating board, seven are appointed by their governor with approval of the senate or legislature, two are appointed by the state board of education or commissioner/secretary of education, and the remaining 11 are appointed/require approval by a mix of organized bodies and public leaders.

It is important to understand who the appointing entity is to understand how the SHEEO's work and the SHEEO agency itself are incorporated into the state policy context. Depending on the appointing entity, the SHEEO may have more direct access to state executives and may be expected to carry out the higher education agenda of the governor, whereas SHEEOs not appointed by the governor may have more autonomy but may need to invest time and energy into building coalitions and gaining stakeholder support to implement their policy agenda. Research on how appointing authorities impact the SHEEO agency agenda is limited.<sup>16</sup>

**TABLE 8**  
**SHEEO APPOINTING AUTHORITY, FY 2021**

APPOINTING AUTHORITY	STATE(S)
COORDINATING BOARD	AK, AL, IL, IN, KY, MO, NE, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV, WY
COORDINATING BOARD WITH APPROVAL OF GOVERNOR	AR, OR, PR
COORDINATING BOARD WITH APPROVAL OF SENATE	LA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	DE, NY
GOVERNING BOARD	AK, AZ, CA, CT, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, KS, ME, MN, MS, MT, MP, NV, NH, NY, NC, ND, PA, RI, SD, VT, WI, WY
GOVERNING BOARD WITH APPROVAL OF GOVERNOR AND SENATE	UT
GOVERNOR	PA
GOVERNOR APPOINTS BASED ON THE CANDIDATES AND COUNCIL SELECTS	WA
GOVERNOR NOMINATES AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CONFIRMS	NH
GOVERNOR WITH APPROVAL OF SENATE OR LEGISLATURE	CO, CT, MD, MN, NJ, NM, OH
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OR COMMISSIONER/SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	DC, MA

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

To better serve our members, understand and diversify the pipeline to the SHEEO position, and create ways to better develop those interested in the position, SHEEO asked our members to answer several demographic questions and questions about their postsecondary education experience, prior job experience, and prior education experience.<sup>17</sup>

16. Tandberg, D., Fowles, J., & McLendon, M. (2017). The governor and the state higher education executive officer: How the relationship shapes state financial support for higher education. *The Journal for Higher Education*, 88, 110-134.

17. Bishop, B. (2019, January). *The road to the state higher education executive office: Prior job experiences, degree attainment, and minimum job qualifications of state higher education executive officers*. [https://sheeomain.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/SHEEO\\_RoadPolicyBrief.pdf](https://sheeomain.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/SHEEO_RoadPolicyBrief.pdf)

## SHEEO DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

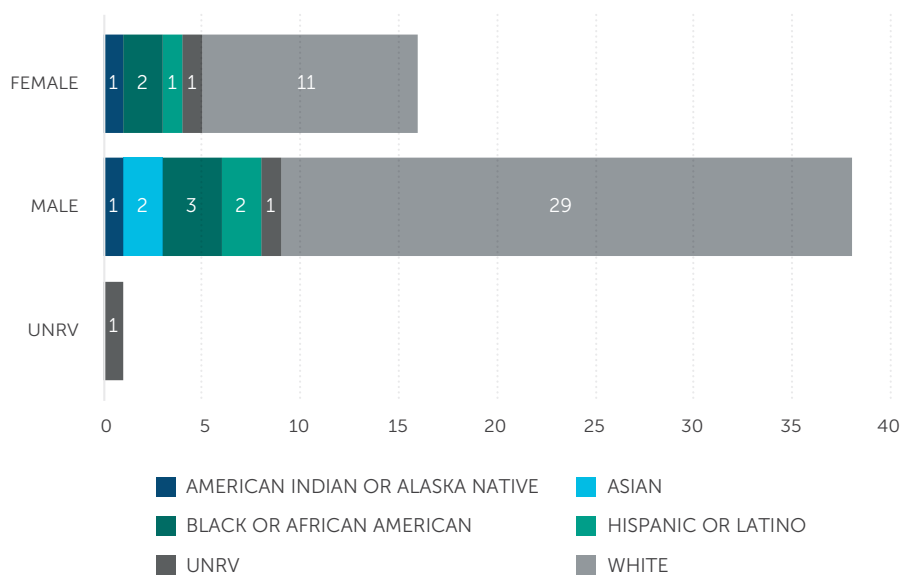
Like in senior leadership, white males are the most represented race and sex group in the SHEEO position, comprising 53% of all SHEEOs (*Figure 7*). Of the 55 SHEEOs:

- 40 SHEEOs are white, and 29 of those are white males.
- Two SHEEOs are Black or African American females, and three are Black or African American males.
- Two SHEEOs are American Indian or Alaska Native (one male and one female).
- Two SHEEOs are Hispanic or Latino males, one is a Hispanic or Latina SHEEO female.
- Two SHEEOs are Asian males.
- Three SHEEOs are UNRV.

White females saw the largest increase, from eight to 11 SHEEOs from FY20 to FY21. Asian male, Black or African American male, Hispanic or Latina female, and Hispanic or Latino male SHEEOs grew by one. Black or African American females (-2) and white males (-5) were the only race and sex groups to decline in the past year.

SHEEOs who identify as female increased from 26% to 29%; these increases were seen in white females and Hispanic or Latina females. Black or African American female SHEEOs experienced a 50% decline (-2), American Indian or Alaska Native female SHEEOs remained the same, and there was no representation of Asian or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander female SHEEOs in either FY20 or FY21.

**FIGURE 7**  
**SHEEO RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN, AND SEX, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

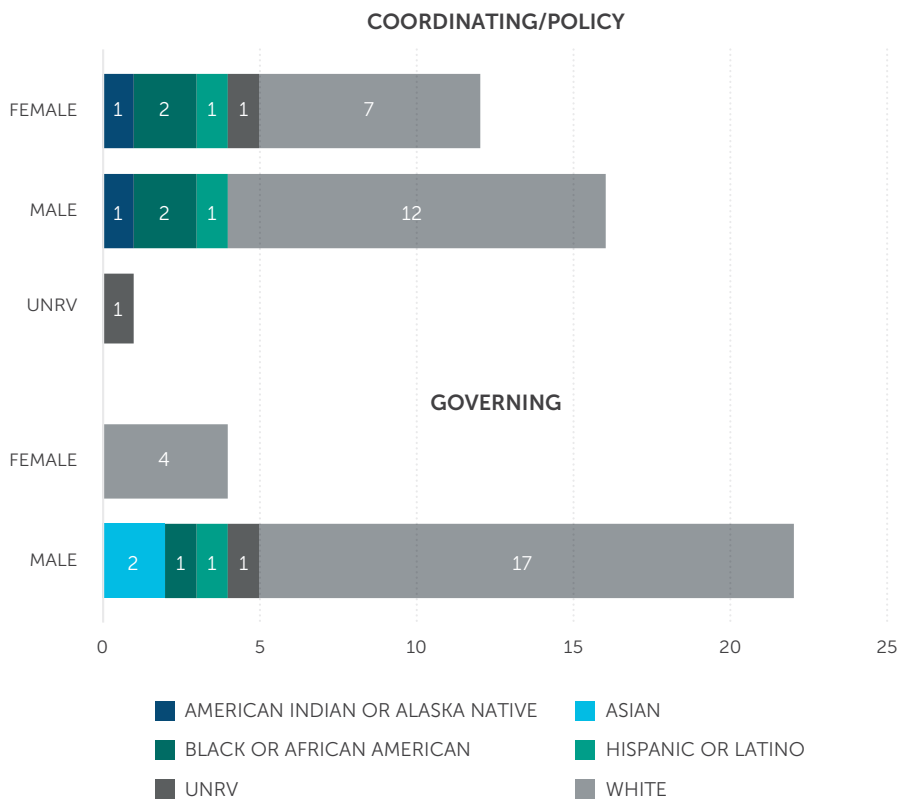
1. UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

When disaggregated by board type, only two American Indian or Alaska Native SHEEOs, four out of five Black or African American SHEEOs, and two out of three Hispanic or Latino SHEEOs led a coordinating/policy board. On the other hand, the only two Asian SHEEOs both led governing boards (*Figure 8*).

Eighty-five percent of governing board SHEEOs are male, compared to 55% of coordinating/policy board SHEEOs. While 41% of coordinating board SHEEOs are female, just 15% of governing board SHEEOs are female. It is important to note that 50% of governing board female SHEEOs are interim SHEEOs. American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, and Hispanic or Latina female SHEEOs all lead coordinating boards, while the SHEEOs who identify as female who lead governing boards are all white.

**FIGURE 8**  
**SHEEO SEX, RACE, AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN BY BOARD TYPE, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

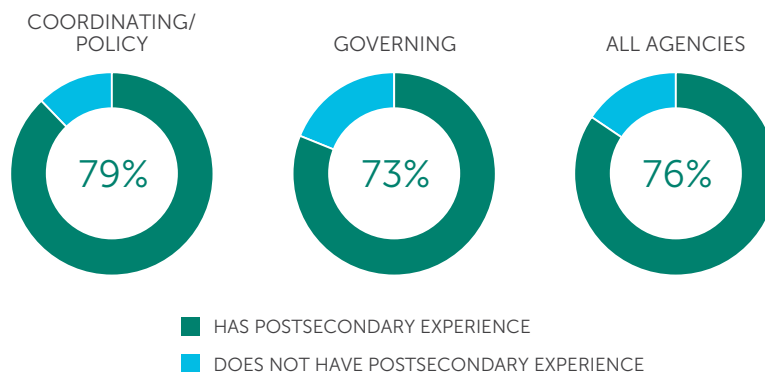
1. UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## SHEEO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Data on previous postsecondary education experience for SHEEOs are collected to better understand the prior experiences of current SHEEOs and to allow the SHEEO association to better respond to the needs of our members. Postsecondary education experience is defined as working in a postsecondary institution or system at least once in their career as a full-time professional. As seen in *Figure 9*, 76% of SHEEOs have postsecondary education experience. When disaggregated by board type, coordinating/policy boards had slightly more SHEEOs with postsecondary education experience (79%) compared to governing boards (73%).

**FIGURE 9**  
**SHEEO PREVIOUS POSTSECONDARY JOB EXPERIENCE, FY 2021**



**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## SHEEO IMMEDIATE PRIOR JOB EXPERIENCE

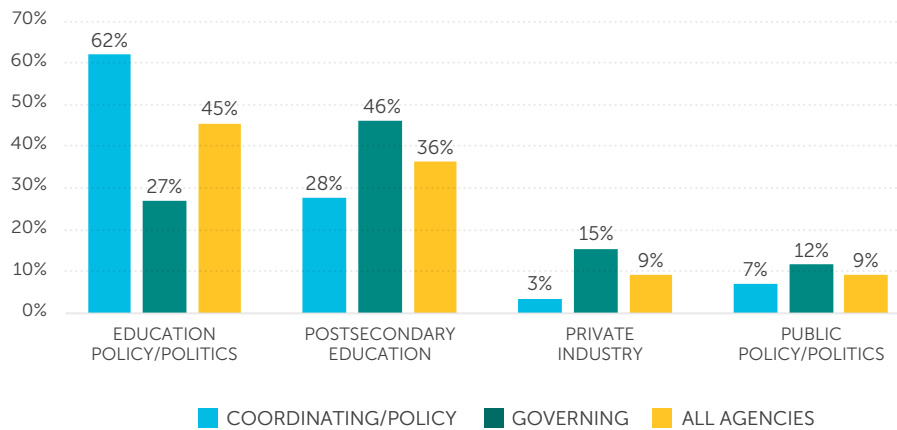
*Figure 10* shows the immediate past job experience for SHEEOs in total and broken down by coordinating/policy and governing boards. Twenty-five (45%) SHEEOs came directly from education policy/politics, whereas 20 (36%) SHEEOs came directly from postsecondary education institutions or systems. Five SHEEOs (9%) came from private industry, and five SHEEOs came from public policy/politics unrelated to education.

The data show stark differences in the most recent fields from which SHEEOs in coordinating/policy boards and governing boards came. SHEEOs at coordinating/policy boards were more likely to come from education policy/politics and less likely than those at governing boards to come directly from postsecondary education institutions and systems:

- Eighteen (62%) coordinating/policy board SHEEOs came from education policy/politics, compared to only seven (27%) governing board SHEEOs.
- Eight (28%) coordinating/policy board SHEEOs came from postsecondary education, compared to 12 (46%) governing board SHEEOs.
- One coordinating/policy board SHEEO came from private industry and two from public policy/politics that are not related to education.
- Four governing board SHEEOs came from private industry, and three came from public policy/politics that are not related to education.

These differences may be due to the different responsibilities governing and coordinating/policy boards have and the skills their SHEEO may be required to have in order to perform the job at the highest level. These differences could also be due to the state higher education community's perception of capabilities and skills needed to perform.

**FIGURE 10**  
**SHEEO IMMEDIATE PRIOR JOB EXPERIENCE, FY 2021**



**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

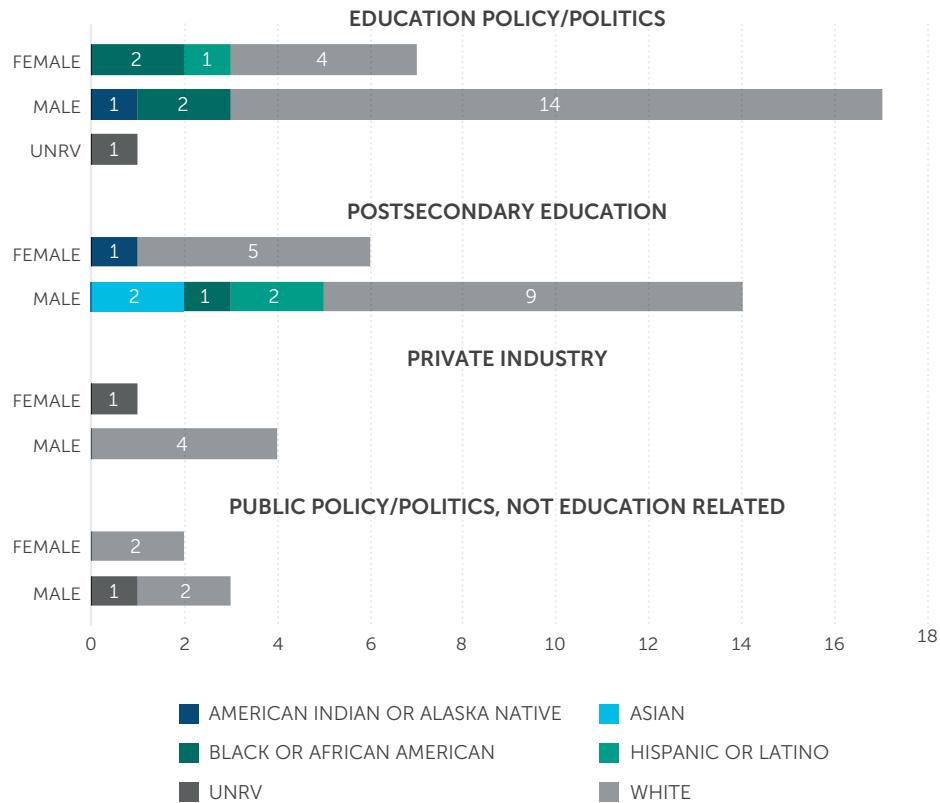
When disaggregated by race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and sex, it is apparent that there are differences in SHEEOs' immediate prior job experience that may be important. *Figure 11* shows that in FY21, American Indian or Alaska Native SHEEOs, Asian SHEEOs, Black or African American SHEEOs, and Hispanic or Latino SHEEOs all came immediately from education policy/politics or postsecondary education, whereas white SHEEOs and UNRV SHEEOs were the only race category to come from private industry or public policy/politics.

*Figure 11* demonstrates the difference in immediate past job experience by sex. Female SHEEOs and male SHEEOs have similar representation in each of the prior job experience categories, with the only major difference being that 11% of male SHEEOs came directly from private industry compared to the 6% of female SHEEOs. These data show that white females and white males are more evenly distributed across each field of immediate prior job experiences, whereas American Indian or Alaska native females and males, Asian males, Black or African American females and males, and Hispanic or Latino female and male SHEEOs all came from education-specific job backgrounds.



FIGURE 11

**SHEEO IMMEDIATE PRIOR JOB EXPERIENCE BY RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN, AND SEX, FY 2021**



**NOTES:**

1. UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

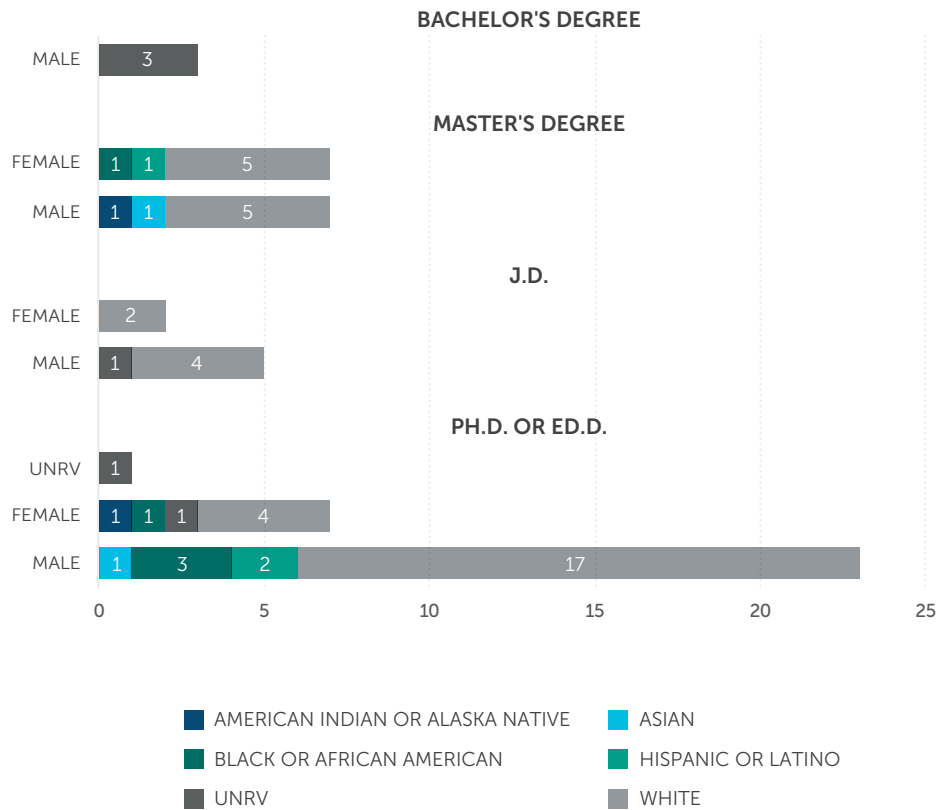
## SHEEO DEGREE ATTAINMENT

In addition to prior job experiences, formal education training is an important consideration in understanding the SHEEO. SHEEOs bring unique perspectives from their prior education experience, and with each unique perspective, SHEEOs will have strengths and areas for growth that they bring to their position. *Figure 12* shows that a majority (31, or 56%) of SHEEOs have a Ph.D. or Ed.D. Of the remaining 24 SHEEOs, fourteen have a master’s degree, seven have a J.D., and three have a bachelor’s degree.

To better understand what experiences and knowledge SHEEOs bring, SHEEO disaggregated the highest level of education by race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and sex. These data show that all American Indian or Alaska Native SHEEOs, Asian SHEEOs, Black or African American SHEEOs, and Hispanic or Latino SHEEOs have a graduate degree (master’s degree, a Ph.D., or Ed.D). Furthermore, Ph.D.s and Ed.D.s were most common for Black or African American SHEEOs: 80% (4) of Black or African American SHEEOs have a Ph.D. or Ed.D., compared to 50% (1) of American Indian or Alaska Native SHEEOs, 50% (1) of Asian SHEEOs, 67% (2) of Hispanic or Latino SHEEOs, and 53% (21) of white SHEEOs. Additionally, 100% (3) of SHEEOs without a graduate degree are white, and 88% (6) of SHEEOs who hold a J.D. are white, with 12% (1) having UNRV race or Hispanic or Latino origin.

When disaggregated by sex, *Figure 12* shows the variation in highest level of education between male SHEEOs and female SHEEOs. Male SHEEOs are represented in each degree category, whereas female SHEEOs are represented in all categories but the bachelor's degree. Put another way, all female SHEEOs have a graduate degree, while not all male SHEEOs do. Additionally, 44% (7) of SHEEOs who are female have earned their master's degree, and 44% (7) have earned their Ph.D. or Ed.D., whereas 18% of male SHEEOs have earned their master's degree and 61% have earned their Ph.D. or Ed.D.

**FIGURE 12**  
**HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION BY SEX, RACE, AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN, FY 2021**



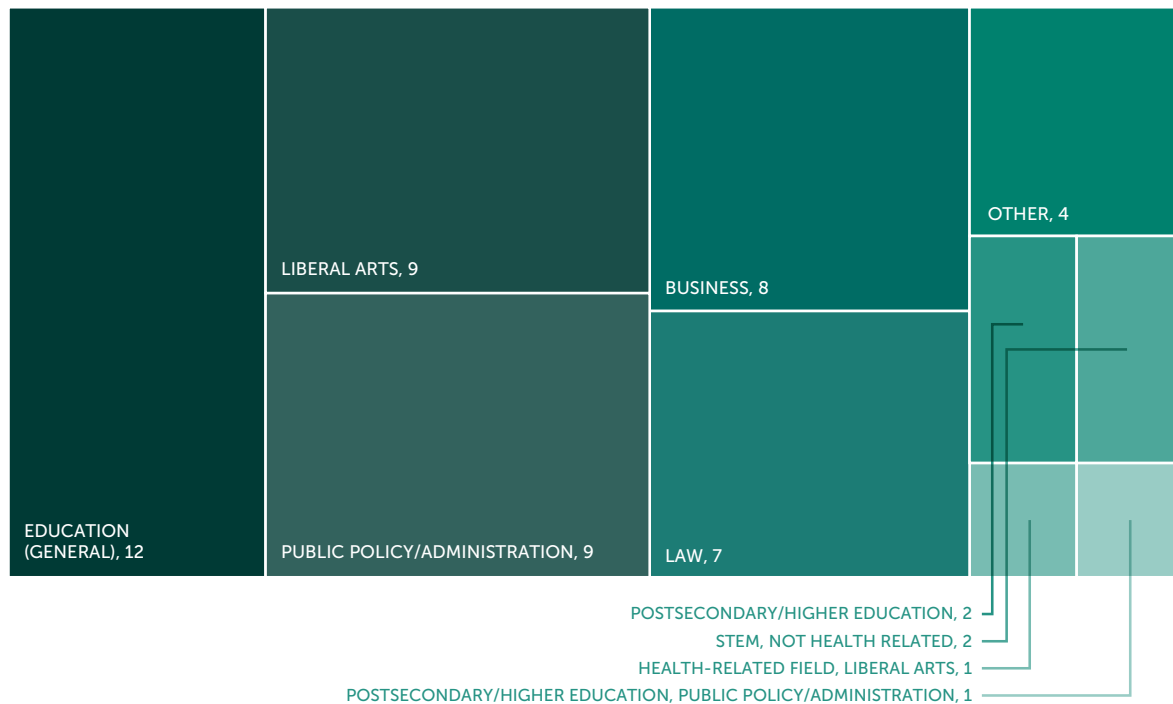
**NOTES:**

1. UNRV means unknown, non-reporting, or vacant.

**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

Figure 13 shows the wide range of degree disciplines that SHEEOs studied. Twelve SHEEOs have a degree in education (general); nine have degrees in liberal arts or public policy/administration; eight have degrees in business; seven have a law degree; four have a degree in “other” (e.g., organizational development); two in postsecondary/higher education; two have degrees in a STEM, non-health-related field; one has a degree in a health-related field; and one has a degree in both postsecondary/higher education and public policy/administration. It is apparent that SHEEOs come from varied educational and professional backgrounds and that SHEEOs come to their positions with a breadth of knowledge and experience.

**FIGURE 13**  
**DISCIPLINE OF HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION, FY 2021**



**SOURCE:** State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE DATA

Understanding staffing, budget, and function data is increasingly important as states further pursue their higher education agendas. States can better evaluate themselves relative to peers while also tracking their agency's specific functions and budgets. These data can also guide agencies when making changes to their missions, merging with other state agencies, or looking to expand or limit their work. It is important for agencies to have this information as they evaluate how they can best serve their state populations while also pursuing new programs and functions.

As states continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, tough decisions regarding budgets, staffing, and purpose will be made. The data in this report can help illuminate a path for SHEEO agencies to ensure their staffing is able to accommodate new changes and current responsibilities. SHEEO agencies are still performing many functions with limited staffing and budget support that may not match the breadth of their work. These data may help SHEEO agencies secure additional funding, which can go to further supporting higher education in their respective states.

SHEEO, the association, uses data on staffing, budget, and functions to advocate for more support for our members; these data allow us to continue our efforts to professionalize the field. Currently, we use these data to better understand our members, make valid comparisons for members to better evaluate their performance, and conduct further research on our members. We hope to provide more in-depth governance research and track emerging priorities for our members, moving forward.

Demographic data regarding SHEEO agency staff, senior leadership, and SHEEOs are important as they show the lack of racial/ethnic diversity within SHEEO agencies. Senior leadership staff and SHEEOs are predominantly male and white, do not reflect their FTE staff demographics, and do not reflect an increasingly diverse higher education student population. SHEEO agencies should utilize these data to implement ways to further diversify their leadership and the SHEEO agency as a whole. SHEEO, the association, plans to use these data to develop equity-based strategies to diversify SHEEO agencies, create a pipeline for more diverse SHEEOs, and support SHEEOs in becoming more equity-minded.

Collecting information on SHEEOs' educational and professional backgrounds enables SHEEO, the association, to better understand the experiences SHEEOs are bringing to the position. SHEEO hopes to utilize these data to strategically onboard new SHEEOs, provide them with more professional development, and connect SHEEOs based on prior education and employment experience.

## CONCLUSION

The FY21 SHEEO Membership Report shares detailed data on various aspects of the SHEEO agency ranging from FTE and budget information to senior leadership and SHEEO data. This year's report includes expanded data collections and refined definitions to increase the usability and accuracy of the data we report. We hope these data will allow SHEEO agencies to compare themselves to their peers and find new ways to develop and react to their states' needs, and allow SHEEO the organization to better serve its membership

Agency function data allow SHEEO to track emerging priorities for its membership and develop programming focused on those priorities. SHEEO agency budget, function, and staff data provide SHEEO, the association, with more data to understand the needs of its membership and better advocate for support. Common functions include academic planning, program approval, and program review functions; communications and government relations for higher education; state-level coordination; institutional oversight; research, data analysis, and data reporting; and budgeting and fiscal policy analysis for higher education.

Our analyses found that coordinating/policy boards saw an increase in FTE staff, but governing boards saw a decrease in FTE staff from FY20 to FY21. Coordinating/policy boards and governing boards saw an increase in median operating budgets. We also found that SHEEO agency staff, SHEEO agency senior leadership, and SHEEOs are not very diverse regarding sex and race/ethnicity and lack representation of American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, multiracial, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander people. SHEEO senior leadership and SHEEOs are predominantly male. Starting with general agency staff to the higher levels of the hierarchy with senior leadership and the SHEEO position itself, the demographic makeup becomes less diverse by race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and sex. Finally, these data show that SHEEOs overwhelmingly have postsecondary education experience and that 45% of SHEEOs came directly from working in education policy/politics, with coordinating/policy board SHEEOs more likely to have come directly from education policy/politics and governing board SHEEOs more likely to have come directly from postsecondary education.

As state higher education policy continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and increased calls for racial justice, SHEEO members will be the ones creating and maintaining policies and programs that respond to these needs. These data show that COVID-19 had an effect on SHEEO agency staffing, budgets, and functions they perform. These data describe the complex and varied nature of SHEEO agencies and point to the need for further study of how SHEEO agencies participate in the policy process and how the data in this report impact their ability to perform their essential functions. Finally, we hope this report and these new data inspire more research focused on SHEEOs and SHEEO agencies, which are not well understood and are under-researched.

# STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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