

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AND THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This paper employs a comparative study as a tool for better understanding of higher-education governance systems. The author presents a comprehensive study on the historical development of public higher education with the purpose of gaining an insight of the current governance systems of higher education in both the State of Illinois and Thailand.

Keywords : Governance system, higher education, comparative study.

INTRODUCTION

The governance system of public higher education seems to be an unresolved issue in almost every country. The models of effective governance are attractive, but always provoke controversies due to the complexity of relationships between higher education and government under changing circumstances. Many groups, such as students, parents, employees, graduates, vendors, donors, and neighbors, are partly or wholly engaged in higher education. The public investments through national budget have increased substantially for the past decades. At the same time, there is a trend that all parents and students are likely to

shoulder the higher costs of higher education. Accordingly, public attention to higher education has grown noticeably. Public officials have viewed higher education as a major expenditure and operational sector requiring attention, coordination, and even regulation in its service to the public and in the competition for scarce resources.

Thailand is currently in the process of restructuring its system due mainly to the principles imposed by Thai Constitution of 1997 and the National Education Act of August 14, 1999. The National Education Act of 1999 has introduced the roadmap of education reform in Thailand.

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The first explicit principle of this law was to combine the management of basic education and higher education into one single body, the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture. However, in October 2002 Thai government divided this proposed ministry into the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture. Basic education and higher education are grouped as commissions under the Ministry of Education. The major policy of restructuring the current governance structure of education into the Ministry of Education is the result of lacking unity in policy framework and unsound coordination between basic education and higher education in the past.

The relationship between government and higher education is the prerequisite for the process of development of higher education. This relationship might result in the ways in which quality, accountability, effectiveness, access, and efficiency can be enhanced, and competition for resources and duplication of efforts correspondingly reduced.

One practical way of gaining an insight of this relationship is to learn from the experiences of other nations. Trethewey (1976) provided five methods of comparative education. The first is through historical analysis to understand the principles of education. The second approach is to explore a cross-disciplinary area. The third focuses on the problem approach, which is considered a scientific means to education reform. The fourth approach is contributing to decision-making in education. And the final one is comparative education as a social science.

This paper presents a comprehensive study of historical development of higher education between the State of Illinois and Thailand with the purpose of understanding the current governance systems of higher education in both places. In doing so, the general concept and various patterns of governance are firstly explored. The evolution of the governance structures that coordinate or govern higher education in the state of Illinois and

in Thailand will be surveyed and discussed as the main focus of this study. Some recommendations for effective governance responding to the changing environment will also be suggested.

GOVERNANCE OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

As a concept, the public good embraces all of higher education. Higher education serves the public good through instruction of students, research to create and disseminate new knowledge, and through providing services to people and organizations external to the academy. Concerning the relationship between government and higher education, it is inevitable that some degree of coordination must be accepted as a condition. Based on this assumption, institutional autonomy is not and will never be complete and absolute. Therefore, the coordinating board is considered a part of higher education as well as a part of government.

Such concepts as coordination, governance, and administration are difficult to define. Some state higher education organizations in the United States are called "Commissions," others "Higher Education Councils" or "Boards for Higher Education." In other nations, there may exist some government agency such as "Ministry," "Commission," or "Council" in charge of supervising or administering higher education for the country. These authorities are referred to as "coordinating bodies" or "coordinating boards." Some are advisory while others make almost binding recommendations and even decisions on substantive matters such as institutional missions, operation, and capital budgets.

Thus, the line dividing coordination from governance is a thin one and in many respects vague and indistinct. However, one crucial governance function is concentrated in those bodies known as boards of trustees. Their responsibilities are to oversee the total management of colleges and universities. Administration, as opposed to governance, is usually viewed as the

day to day internal management of institutional matters.

Since various forms of governance differ from one country to another depending on institutional history, cultures, and values, the official title assigned by law to the boards such as "Regents," "Governors," "Trustees," "Overseers" or "Councils", may be used both for some coordinating bodies and also for some governing boards at both the system and the institutional levels.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

The multi-faceted relationship between government and higher education is largely unexplored and has yet to be analyzed fully. However, the purposes of most previous studies were: 1) to define the proper relationship that should exist between state government and public higher education, 2) to identify the areas where state control exceeded proper limits, and 3) to suggest corrective action. Some studies attempted to reconcile efficiency in state government with the freedom which was required in order that state universities could function properly. Some studies remarked that it had two continuing concerns: whether coordination of public institutions could occur without intruding on governing boards, and whether coordinating boards would impose uniform standards upon all public institutions.

Gove and Floyd (1975) focused on the research literature dealing with the administration and politics of public higher education. Their article included sections on state coordination, state government relations, trustees and faculty, university and the state, and brief comments about the more recent trend on policy outcomes in higher education finance. The authors focused on the scarcity of literature pertaining to higher education politics. Much of their efforts correctly addressed the predominant concern in the literature on the proper roles of the university and state

government regarding such matters as governance, financial support, and the relationship between the university and external constituencies.

Glenny (1959) realized that structure was only one of a host of influential variables at the state level affecting public higher education. Indeed, he cited advantages as well as weaknesses of each of the three types of coordinated systems' those with governing authority, those with authority to coordinate but not govern, and those only having voluntary coordinating influence. The single governing board having governance authority for all public universities was the oldest type of board and, "most effectively performs the major functions of coordinating and unifying the system." The coordinating board was a much more popular and recently utilized board, but the coordinating board exhibited problems between itself and institutional governing boards. Voluntary councils, on the other hand, allowed the greatest degree of freedom to individual campuses. However, the largest campus tended to dominate and the status quo within such arrangements tended to be preserved. The need for accountability in the expenditure of public funds was also recognized.

A decade later, there was a study by Robert Berdahl which accepted some form of statewide agency for higher education as a given. Berdahl (1971) was careful to specify that each state must determine for itself, on the basis of its own traditions, needs, and resources, whether the specialized agency should be a voluntary one established by the institutions themselves or a statutory one created by the state. Further, Berdahl wrote that states must decide for themselves whether such a statutory agency should be either a consolidated governing board or a coordinating board. He also identified the possibility of utilizing the state board of education as a coordinating agency. Berdahl went on to recommend a strong and independent authority, as well as the necessity to have strong powers in

program review, budget review, capital outlay review, and federal programs.

Wilson (1985) defined the meanings and scope of accountability and autonomy. Accountability is a persistent demand levied on universities by external sponsoring authorities and agencies. Accountability was a central bitter term in debates about higher education. Accountability implies many meanings. Financial accounts are the most obvious. Performance accountability sets high expectations without distinct standard. Lacking the clarity of cost accounting or profit-and-loss statements, universities must develop techniques for evaluation. Faculty assessment, teaching evaluations, personnel assessment, program review, research reporting, and quality assurance involve many people.

In contrast, the American tradition is shaped by the pattern of academic freedom embedded in a corporate structure of self-government. This pattern has permitted the growth of large, varied, complex, and multipurpose institutions. The freedom to seek knowledge, to preserve it, and to place it at the service of society is protected by autonomy. In addition, the organizational agility that permits an efficient disposition of money and talent depends on relatively autonomous governance. The multiplicity of clientele, constituents, and support groups is the source of difficulty with accountability. At the core of this difficulty is the changing relationship between the universities and state governments. The pattern of distribution of authority from state government to individual institutional administrations varies substantially among the several states. In some states, for instance Michigan and California, the research universities retain a great range of autonomy to manage their own affairs, while in others, state government agencies involve themselves in detailed planning, budgeting, program review, and even preauditing of expenditures. These patterns have evolved over time. They are not likely to change easily or rapidly,

although that kind of rigidity may itself vary as a function of historical roots and bureaucratic interests.

Schick, Novak, Norton, and Elam (1992) focused on both organizational structure and leadership by identifying characteristics of effective governance. Their study described representative structures in Ohio, Tennessee, Maine, and Pennsylvania. They have chosen four states as case studies because the four states offer structural differences from one another but are representative of the major variations in governance structures that exist across the nation. These structures (with their occasional exceptions and frequent variations) can be summarized as follows:

1. All senior public universities are governed within a single system without any separate coordination body. There may or may not be local institutional boards.

2. All senior public universities, some with branch campuses or geographically dispersed satellite campuses exist in a highly autonomous environment. Each university has its own institutional governing board. A state coordinating board exists with significant statutory powers.

3. A public university system coexists with other public systems and/or with a single public institution, all interacting with a state coordinating board or planning body. The system(s) may be homogeneous or heterogeneous and there may or may not be local institutional boards.

According to their study, governance structure alone not only determines success or failure of quality education, but also how the performance of board members and education leaders contributes to the outcome. The authors also suggested that no one perfect structure is best for every state. Each structure can offer an environment favorable to leadership and institution autonomy which is of benefit to students, faculty members, and citizens.

Yossomsakdi (2000) conducted a comparative study on the governance system of higher education between Republic of Korea and Thailand and found

that in Thailand the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of University Affairs were both government agencies in charge of supervising and administering higher education. This was not the case in Korea since the Ministry of Education was the sole government agency responsible for education at all levels. However, in Korea the Government has established the Korean Council for University Education, as a non-governmental organization, to play the role in coordinating among higher-education institutions.

GOVERNANCE OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS

(This part is mostly summarized from Keenan, 1975)

In Illinois, the term "coordination" embraces statewide master planning, financial planning, determination of institutional scope and mission, and program review and approval. These functions are concentrated in the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), created in 1961, which is most often described as a planning and coordinating board.

The history of Illinois higher education governance would begin in 1945. At that time Illinois had two distinct public higher-education "systems." These were: 1) the University of Illinois, consisting of its Urbana-Champaign campus and the medical complex in Chicago, both governed by the University's own Board of Trustees; and 2) five institutions governed by the Teachers College Board. These institutions, as they were named in 1945, were Northern Illinois State College at DeKalb, Eastern Illinois State Teachers College at Charleston, Western Illinois State Teachers College at Macomb, Illinois State Normal University at Normal, and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

More specifically, the Board of Trustees for the University of Illinois was created to supervise the University since its inception in 1867, while the Teachers College Board was created in 1917 to replace separate boards for each normal school.

The Teachers College Board had been under the direction of the Department of Registration and Education with its departmental director serving as chairman of the Teachers College Board until 1951. In 1949, the Illinois General Assembly removed Southern Illinois University from the jurisdiction of the Teachers College Board and established the Southern Illinois University's Board of Trustees as an independent agency. In 1951, the Illinois General Assembly also made the Teachers College Board an independent agency free from the supervision of the Department of Registration and Education. In 1957, with the support of legislators from the DeKalb area, the Illinois General Assembly changed the formal name of Northern Illinois from State College to University in spite of opposition from the Teachers College Board. In 1965, the Teachers College Board was itself renamed the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities.

Prior to the enactment of the Higher Education Act of 1961, there was no central coordinating agency in Illinois. The coordination of Illinois higher education was undertaken jointly by the governor and the legislature. The state government dealt with four governing boards: The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois which oversaw the Urbana campus and the Chicago Medical School; the Teachers College Board that governed Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, Eastern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University; the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University which oversaw the Carbondale campus; and the Superintendent of Public Instruction who governed 18 publicly funded community colleges.

In the late 1950s, sharp conflicts intensified between legislators who had long sought to protect the interests of the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University. In an effort to handle these kinds of controversies more effectively, the Illinois General Assembly in 1957 voted to establish the Commission of Higher Education. The

Commission became a center of controversy as it advocated and promoted a strong central coordinating board. All six existing state institutions opposed the Commission's plan.

However, there were many reasons to support a central coordinating board. The charge of needless program duplication, even at the graduate level, reflects wasteful costs. Policy variations among institutions, such as diverse admission and transfer policies around the state, brought protests from legislators who were being pressured by their constituents to seek uniformity for the sake of students. Faculty and staff salary differentials also presented problems. Many legislators and other knowledgeable citizens felt that the universities simply could not be trusted to manage the kind of expansion that seemed to be on the horizon in Illinois public higher education. Related to this argument was an uneasiness felt by some political scientists and management specialists that the lack of neatness and order in the Illinois system in 1961 called for a central planning unit.

The Higher Education Act of 1961 established Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and gave it the authority to develop master plans, conduct studies to determine state needs, review operating budgets, make recommendations, and establish priority for capital projects. Between 1964 and 1976, IBHE developed a four phase Master Plan and since then has engaged in continuous planning. IBHE membership consisted of ten public members appointed to six-year terms by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, a non-voting student member elected annually by the Student Advisory Committee, and the chair persons of the five university systems and the Illinois Scholarship Commission. The chairman of IBHE is designated by the Governor, and the board is served by a professional staff headed by the executive director.

In phase II of the Master Plan, IBHE appointed five new study committees. These were:

1) Committee L, studying Institutional Size and Capacity; Committee M, studying Demography and Location; Committee N, studying Governing Structure; Committee O, studying Programs and Experimentation; and Committee P, studying Scholarship and Financial Aids.

The most controversial issue, the matter of governance, was assigned to Committee N. Committee N outlined the governance system which came to be known as the 'System of Systems.' Committee N preferred to build upon the current practices rather than to make sweeping changes. Committee members discussed two principles for assigning institutions to governing boards: 1) role and function, or 2) location. They noted that both principles were in use in Illinois, but stated their preference for role and function as the determining factor.

Committee N identified five types of public universities that were later in existence in the state as follows:

1) Fully developed, complex, multipurpose universities, University of Illinois;

2) Rapidly developing, complex, multipurpose universities with a unique geographic mission, Southern Illinois University;

3) Liberal arts universities, institutions having graduate programs leading to the doctorate in a "significant number of fields," but whose breadth of offerings is restricted to the liberal arts and sciences and other related undergraduate programs, with only a limited number of associated graduate professional schools, usually education and business. These universities, Illinois State University and Northern Illinois University, would be governed by a newly created Board of Regents;

4) State universities and colleges, essentially undergraduate institutions with a limited scope of offerings and limited graduate programs at a masters degree level. The two institutions then fitting this mission definition were Eastern Illinois University and Western Illinois University; and

5) Junior and community colleges, to be jointly governed by locally elected district boards and Illinois Community College Board.

According to Committee N, this classification criteria provided a rationale for assigning both old and new institutions to systems. Moreover, it provided "a balance of dissimilar systems for coordination and a balance of similar institutions for governance." Having established these criteria, Committee N added the Regency System and transformed the Teachers College Board into another system, Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities.

In 1967 the Illinois General Assembly created a new Board of Regents to govern Northern Illinois University and Illinois State University, taking these two institutions out of the jurisdiction of the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities. It should be noted that by 1967 these two had outstripped the other two (Western and Eastern Illinois Universities) in size and apparent growth potential.

In the same year, Chicago Teachers College, a local institution which had been substantially subsidized by the state for some years, was fully taken over by the state, becoming Chicago State College. One of its two campuses has been given the name and identity of Northeastern Illinois State College. Both the new colleges were governed by the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities.

The 1967 legislature also provided for the establishment of two new senior colleges (three-year institutions open only to third-, fourth-, and fifth-year students, one to be located in Chicago and one at Springfield) and authorized IBHE to assign the governance of each of these two institutions to one of the four existing governing boards. IBHE later announced that the new institution at the south periphery of Chicago, later named Governors State University, would go to the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities and the Springfield

institution (later named Sangamon State University and in 1995 becoming a branch campus of the University of Illinois) would be governed by the Board of Regents.

The Board of Regents and the Board of Governors consist of nine public members appointed by the State Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, and nine nonvoting student members from each of the universities under their jurisdiction. The Southern Illinois University's Board of Trustees has seven members appointed by the Governor and one nonvoting student member from each campus. The exception to the gubernatorial selection process is the University of Illinois' Board of Trustees, where nine public members are elected by the public (in addition to one nonvoting student member selected by each campus). These boards are also served by professional staff.

The staff of three systems, which included the Southern Illinois University System, the Board of Regents System, and the Board of Governors System, is headed by the chancellor of each system. Presidents of the various universities within the system report to their boards through the chancellors.

The institution of chancellors as systems heads is a relatively recent innovation in Illinois. In the past, the professional staff for each of the three boards was headed by an executive director. In the late 1970s, there was a move to strengthen this position and campus presidents and ultimately the three chancellorships were created. (Systems chancellors should not be confused with campus chancellors at the University of Illinois. The University of Illinois, like many other flagship universities around the nation, is headed by a president. The heads of the three University of Illinois campuses, Urbana-Champaign, Chicago Circle and Springfield, are called chancellors.)

The System of Systems, therefore, divided the roles of IBHE and of the four systems that governed the public universities at that time. The statutory powers of IBHE were distinguished

from those of governing boards. The responsibilities of IBHE were concerned with coordination for higher education, planning and policy development, budget development, program approval and review, information systems development, and recommendations about legislation to the state government. As for the governing boards, responsibilities of the four systems usually included: serving as the corporate entity responsible for operations, management, control, and maintenance of institutions; employing the president and other employees of each system; administering collecting tuition and fees; initiating and responding to litigation; adopting policies and procedures; issuing revenue bonds and entering into agreements for the design and construction of facilities; and entering into contracts and leases.

In July of 1970 Committee N was reconvened as part of the work on Master Plan Phase III. Members were directed to examine and evaluate the governing structures and the processes of governance in Illinois higher education in light of recent developments. The Committee's primary consideration was whether or not to retain the System of Systems in its existing form. A number of alternatives were discussed and five were Vol.1, No.1, 2003 Governance system of public higher education actually considered. They included the System of Systems in its recent form; the System of Systems with changes in board assignments; a new system of institutional boards, a mixed system with some institutions having their own board and others being assigned to multi-campus governing boards.

In its deliberations, Committee N quickly dismissed the idea of a single statewide board as "foreign" to educational traditions in Illinois. The notion of a mixed system was abandoned as well on the ground that it would be unstable. The feeling was that if one institution received its own board agitation would continue until each institution received the same consideration.

Ultimately, Committee N concluded that it would be better to strengthen the existing system rather than create a new system. Members suggested that the main advantage of system boards was that they could attend to the peculiar problems of each institution under their governance without ceding the power needed to effectively represent their interest to IBHE. Nevertheless, governance has remained a topic of concern and discussion.

The core issue of the 1980s and perhaps beyond was to challenge the desirability of statewide coordination, to extol the virtues of institutional freedom and autonomy, and to decry the intrusion of state government and agencies such as budget offices, legislative audit committees, and fiscal bureaus into the affairs of universities. Public universities or their governing boards are legal entities in the public sector of state government.

According to the charges raised by Somit (1987), former President of Southern Illinois University, the System of Systems had brought about disagreement among educators. These were: 1) IBHE was more concerned with protecting private than public higher education, 2) IBHE had become a compliant gubernatorial tool in limiting expenditures for public administration, 3) IBHE had been increasingly ineffectual at its major responsibility, 4) IBHE's budget recommendation consistently favored the University of Illinois, 5) the System of Systems was needlessly expensive, and the System of Systems was irrational with regard both to its overall structure and to the manner in which the individual institutions are grouped into systems. Somit suggested two alternatives to correct these shortcomings: one is New York's "all in a single system" concept; the other is California's "different mission, different system" design.

Somit's proposal for a change in higher education was strongly opposed by Furman, former executive director of IBHE. Furman (1987) argued

that the System of Systems was almost perfect, but there was little evidence that any of the various governing structures was without problem. The change in structure of higher education tended to become an overwhelming distraction for both the institutions involved and the political leadership of the state.

These arguments were clarified by Monat, former President of Northern Illinois University and Chancellor of Board of Regents. Monat (1988) commented on the administrative effectiveness of Illinois higher education governance and coordination systems to a Hearing Panel established by Senate Resolution No. 460. According to his comment, there was a sensitivity to the difference between the governance responsibilities of the system boards and the coordinating responsibilities of the IBHE. There will always be differing perceptions of these two distinct roles and those perceptions will always be the source of tension. IBHE too often has pressed its coordinating responsibilities to the point of intruding on the statutory governance responsibilities of systems' boards. He also argued that leadership in both coordination and governance was generally the least effective component of the existing system of Illinois higher education. Finally, Monat raised the concern for accountability by requesting the authority to avoid imposing more inhibitions on institutional flexibility and responsiveness of public universities.

In May 1989, IBHE constituted a committee to study the scope, structure, and productivity of Illinois Higher Education. In addition to the structure of Illinois higher education, the committee was designated to examine goals and a number of issues related to accountability and productivity.

The System of Systems in the governance of Illinois higher education was replaced by the current system. In March 1995, Governor Edgar signed legislation that recognized public university systems. Public Act 89-0004 dissolved the Board of Regents and Board of Governors with effect

from January 1, 1996. New and separate governing boards were established for Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Illinois State University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University. The legislation also provided for the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois to assume governance responsibilities for Sangamon State University. The name change to the University of Illinois at Springfield and the transfer of the campus was effective on July 1, 1995. Therefore, each senior university has been assigned its own governing board.

Public Act 89-0004 prescribes the structure and composition of public university governing boards. The Act reduces membership of IBHE to 15 members. The Governor appoints 10 members from the general population, one representative from a public university board, and one member chosen from a private college or university board of trustees. Remaining on the board are a voting student member and the chairs of the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

According to the Act, the public university system was reduced to nine public universities. Seven new governing boards were created. Each new board comprises seven members appointed by the Governor. The University of Illinois with three campuses is still governed by the University of Illinois' Board of Trustees. The Southern Illinois University with two campuses is still governed by Southern Illinois University's Board of Trustees. However, the law called for the members of the Board of Trustees to be appointed by the Governor rather than elected.

The changes in public university governance call for decentralization of decision making and accountability. A level of governance was eliminated and the emphasis was shifted from systems to individual universities. The reorganization was intended to create governing boards that are more

responsive to the interests of each individual institution and more accountable to parents and students. However, IBHE is still the coordinating agency between the state government and public universities, while each senior university has been assigned its own governing board with the justification that each board would become more familiar with and supportive of its own institution and its mission.

Governance of Public Higher Education in Thailand (For more details see Yossomsakdi, 2002)

In Thailand, the public universities and the government have had a close relationship since the creation of the first university over half a century ago. Until now, public universities are still considered as public settings with departmental status under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of University Affairs (MUA).

In the early 1950s, Thailand had only five universities, all of which were attached to different ministries. Chulalongkorn University and Thammasat University were under the Ministry of Education. Mahidol University, formerly known as the University of Medical Sciences, belonged to the Ministry of Public Health. Kasetsart University, specializing in agricultural science, was under the Ministry of Agriculture. Silpakorn University, which specialized in fine art, was attached to the Ministry of Culture, which ceased to exist in 1966 (Watson, 1980).

In 1954, a College of Education was founded in the Department of Teacher Training under the Ministry of Education and was assigned the task of producing teachers at diploma and degree levels. The College later expanded to several branch campuses in and outside of Bangkok, all of which still focused on teacher training.

In the late 1950s, most universities began to expand their mission to cover broader areas of study. This expansion would later make the government more determined to pull the universities together under a single administrative body.

The idea for coordination of higher education in Thailand was influenced by Sir Charles Darwin, a well-known expert in higher education. He came to Thailand under the auspices of UNESCO in 1953 to assist the Thai government to investigate the condition and status of higher education. Darwin's report prompted the Pibulsongkram government to reform the administrative structure of higher education in Thailand in order to provide more trained professionals and skilled manpower to accelerate national development.

On January 11, 1956, the University Council Act B.E. 2499 was enacted. This Act created a council of 25 members chaired by the Prime Minister. Its primary purpose was to improve higher education and expand it to regional parts of the country. However, before the University Council was fully operational, the Phibulsongkram government was overthrown by a coup led by Marshall Sarit Thanarat on October 20, 1958.

Following the coup, Marshall Sarit tried to enhance national economic development through the introduction of manpower and development plans. He appointed a committee to improve education. The Sarit government, based upon the Committee's report, rearranged the scattered university system by bringing the five universities under the Office of the Prime Minister.

Several technical and professional colleges were established during that period; however, these educational institutes did not offer college degree programs (bachelor's level and higher). Therefore, the universities were distinctly different from the technical and professional colleges. Higher education was then under two separate administrative agencies. Five universities were under the Office of the Prime Minister and the rest, including the College of Education, were under the Ministry of Education.

In order to guarantee the coordination of educational programs at all levels, the National Education Council was created in 1959 by the

National Education Council Act B.E. 2502 to act as an advisory body for the government in matters relating to national educational policies. The Council also undertook the role of the University Council for coordinating the universities. In practice, the National Education Council and the Ministry of Education seemed to be well-coordinated in that the former performed most of the functions of planning and coordinating higher education, while the latter was in charge of planning and administration of education at lower levels (Techakumpuch, 1973).

The Secretary-General of the Council had authority to enforce the resolutions of the National Education Council. To perform its functions, in 1959 the Council formed the following committees: the Committees for Research, 20 members; for Raising Educational Funds, 19 members; for University Administrative Affairs, 23 members; and for University Academic Affairs, 24 members. However, after these committees had considered solutions to problems, their proposed solutions had to go through the Executive Board and then be submitted to the Council for resolutions.

Due to the overlapping functions and the unbalanced combination of these committees, the National Education Council established three new committees in 1966: Committees on Higher Education, 19 members; on Primary and Secondary Education, 17 members; and on General Education, 18 members. Some members served on more than one committee. The Council also delegated the Executive Board to perform more functions on behalf of the Council in order to accelerate its work.

In 1969, the National Education Council Act B.E.2512 replaced the National Education Council Act B.E. 2502. Its main objective was to improve the efficiency of both the National Education Council and its office. There were significant changes in both the composition and the functions of the Council as well.

According to the Act of 1969, the new Council had the Prime Minister as Chairman, the Deputy Prime Minister as Vice Chairman, and the Secretary-General of the Office of the National Education Council as a member and as the Council's secretary. The other members of the Council were Presidents of all universities or higher educational institutions, and high-ranking government officials in the Ministries concerned. Furthermore, the new Act designated the Ministers of all ministries as consultants to the Council. There was an Executive Board of 10 members appointed by the Cabinet. The Executive Board consisted of the Secretary-General of the Office of the National Education Council, the Secretary-General of the Office of the National Economic Development Board, and eight other members appointed by the Cabinet. The Executive Board elected a chairman from its members and served a one-year term. This board had authority and duties as prescribed by laws or assigned by the Council.

The functions of the National Education Council were policy and administration. The policy function was vested in the Council body. Section 9 of the Act of 1969 authorized the Council to consider suggestions, recommendations, or opinions submitted by the Office of the National Education Council; to carry out any functions as prescribed by law; and to submit its opinions to the Cabinet or the Prime Minister. The new law also authorized the Executive Board to perform the duties of the Council if so requested.

The revision of the Act in 1969 gave the Office of the National Education Council wide responsibilities for the formulation of policy and planning at all levels of education. Even though the Office of the National Education Council had expanded the scope and complexity of its functions, it still performed the role of supervising and coordinating public universities. The revision of the law degraded the role of the National Education Council in respect of higher education and created

a negative attitude from university administrators. It later became one of the major reasons for restructuring governance of higher education in Thailand.

The year 1971 was the starting point of the debatable governance structure for Thai higher education at the national level. Thailand faced another political dilemma when Marshall Thanom Kittikachorn staged a coup against himself in November 1971. He dissolved Parliament, banned political parties, and again ruled under an interim Constitution that restored military dominance over the government (Wyatt, 1984).

The military government had a strong intention to reform Thai bureaucracy so that the efficiency and effectiveness of the central administration could be enhanced. The government, therefore, laid down two policy guidelines for all public organizations in order to implement bureaucratic reform. These policy guidelines were aimed to dissolve any public agencies that had unnecessary and overlapping functions, and to reorganize public agencies within the Prime Minister's Office so that their functions would focus on policy planning and evaluation instead of implementation. These guidelines strongly affected the work of the National Education Council because the Council also dealt with implementing functions, such as the approval for the establishment and the dissolution of universities and academic units, the approval of university curricula, and the suggestions for annual budgetary preparation.

It is acknowledged that the major concept of education reform at that time was to transfer all educational institutions to the Ministry of Education. Under the new structure of the Ministry of Education, there were groups of institutions classified by levels of education. Each group would have its own coordinating board and supporting agencies. The new structure was expected to solve the problem of coordination between different

ministries. It was believed that since there were different ministers supervising higher education, their roles would often prevail over the role and functions of the National Education Commission.

In 1964 the Committee for University Civil Servants was established and assigned to the National Education Council, which acted as secretariat. Personnel administration of universities thus divided academic instructors from ordinary civil servants. The coordination and control were rather rigid in this period.

In 1972, the Office of the National Education Council was renamed the National Education Commission. It was given the administrative functions to perform the secretary tasks of the former council, which was incorporated into the Office of the Prime Minister. In the same year, the government also announced the transfer of authority and responsibilities for public universities to the Office of State Universities, and those for private colleges to the Office of the Private Education Commission under the Ministry of Education. Two years later in 1974, the government transferred the control of private colleges to the Office of State Universities.

In 1977, the Office of State Universities was upgraded to a ministerial level and it was renamed the Ministry of University Affairs (MUA). One of the main functions of MUA is as a coordinating agency between public universities and the government.

MUA is responsible for policy formulation and planning of higher education within the framework of the national education plan which is a responsibility of the National Education Commission. Other duties are setting the standards of curriculum and university personnel administration, and making recommendations of budget allocations among public universities. Based on the notion that universities should have academic freedom and autonomy to an appropriate degree, the government made the decision to transpose

the coordinating system from controlling to overseeing. Though higher-learning institutions are obliged to observe and operate their institutions according to the policies laid down, they do in fact enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy and academic freedom.

Furthermore, MUA is the primary channel for cooperation between the government and higher-learning institutions on the basis of coordination rather than control, with no interference in internal affairs. Each university is granted its own charter with the University Council as the supreme administrative body. Each university has its own University Council, directly responsible for the policy and the administration of the university. The University Council is the governing body empowered to formulate academic policies and to issue rules and regulations on university administrative matters. The University Council usually comprises two categories of members: ex-officio and appointed. Each public university has different numbers and combination of membership depending on its own specific laws. A certain number of honorary members are selected from prominent people in various professions, both from the public and private sectors. Some members are selected from the Vice-Presidents, the Deans, and the Directors. The other members are representatives of the university lecturers or academic staff. The term of office for the Council members is varied depending on the type of membership. The President or Rector is the executive head of the university and usually serves for 4 years.

It is interesting to learn that in Thailand both MUA and the Ministry of Education have responsibilities for higher education. Rajabhat Institutes developed from teachers' colleges. The Teachers' College Act of 1975 established teachers' colleges with the purpose of providing academic knowledge and training qualified teachers to the bachelor's degree level. However, owing to a

surplus of teacher education graduates, the Teachers' College Act of 1975 was revised in 1984 to allow the Teacher Education Department, representing 35 teachers' colleges to diversify its curricula to train manpower in various fields other than education. In 1992, the teachers' colleges were renamed Rajabhat Institutes in order to reflect their new tasks and functions. The Rajabhat Institutes Act of 1995 brought changes to the colleges' institutional structure, administration, and autonomy.

Rajamangala Institute of Technology-- formerly the Institute of Technology and Vocational Education-- was first established by the Act in 1975 as a department in the Ministry of Education. In 1989, the name of the institute was changed to Rajamangala Institute of Technology with functions of providing technological education, undertaking research, and extending services to society. Rajamangala Institute of Technology has 40 campuses around the country. The main administrative office consisting of 15 faculties is located in Pathumthani Province.

The National Education Act B.E.2542 was introduced on August 14, 1999. One principle of this new law is to combine the management of national education, religion and culture into one single body, the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture. The Act stipulates that the structure of the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture would comprise four public bodies: (1) the National Council for Education, Religion and Culture; (2) the Commission for Basic Education; (3) the Commission for Higher Education; and (4) the Commission for Religion and Culture. The new structure must be adopted within three years or the year 2002. This was the task of a provisional body, called National Education Reform Office (NERO). The nine qualified members widely selected from prominent scholars and practitioners constituted the committee and supervised the work of NERO. NERO is now in the process of

designing and restructuring the former relevant ministries to match with the new structure.

However, in October 2002 the Thaksin government proposed the new structure of Ministry of Education against the NERO's proposal. The section of culture and religion was then separately upgraded to a new ministry, the Ministry of Culture. MUA was dissolved and its functions would be transferred to the Commission for Higher Education under the Ministry of Education, which will be fully effective by the end of 2002.

CONCLUSION

This paper tries to provide some information of the relationship between government and higher education institutions. As a concept, the coordinating agency represents the accountability of government, while the governing boards represent the autonomy of individual universities. The boundaries between the coordinating agency and governing boards are imprecise. There are frequent occasions for conflict. The governing boards are often concerned that actions of the coordinating agency seem to invade their area of governance. In turn, the coordinating agency often feels frustrated by resistance to what are legitimate functions of coordination.

In Illinois, since the creation of IBHE in 1961, there have been controversies over the governance structure in Illinois higher education. During that period, various alternative models for governance were initiated and debated constantly. Even though recent action by the legislature has transformed the structure of governance system in Illinois higher education, the coordinating board, IBHE, still plays the major role in the new system and may create conflicts among parties concerned. The major events in the development process of public higher education in Illinois are given in Table 1.

Unlike the situation in Illinois, the governance in Thai higher education has undergone different experiences in terms of its structure and development.

The major events in the development process of public higher education in Thailand are given in Table 2. Since Thailand is a unitary state, the governance system of higher education has been under the supervision of the government through MUA. The role of public universities in Thailand is not only based on academic objectives alone, but also responsive to the needs of the society. The coordination of universities at the national level and the interplay of universities with coordinating agencies are fundamental issues. Coordination is all dependent for procedural implementation on laws, orders, and regulations pertaining to individual institutions. In the past few years, MUA and the Ministry of Education had played an important role in the planning and administration of higher education in Thailand. Since MUA was recently merged into the Ministry of Education, the future role of the Commission for Higher Education under the Ministry of Education as well as the University Council of individual universities can determine the role of public universities in Thai society.

After exploring the development process of the governance system both in the State of Illinois and Thailand, it may be perceived that even though various forms of governance differ from one place to another depending on history, cultures and values, the problems of governance in higher education everywhere share common concerns. An improved governance system is necessary so that higher education leaders can transform their institutions to address the existing problems effectively. In fact, the overall effects of the changed environment are forcing re-design of existing governance system. Not only the structure of existing governance needs to be examined, but institutional leadership must also be evaluated. New and strengthened relationships, based on open communication, opportunities for responsible leadership, and mutual respect between government officials and educators are imperative if public

higher education is to succeed. Whether governance structures have several universities under a single governing or coordinating agency, or free standing institutions with individual boards, these structures are the central component expression of partnership between public higher education and government. Communication, accountability and institutional autonomy should be jointly evaluated and enhanced. If higher education governance must be reorganized, the structure should be perceived by its various constituents as better than what preceded it.

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APPENDIX

Table A1. List of major events in the development process of public higher education in Illinois.

Year	Major events
1945	There was no central coordinating agency in Illinois. The coordination of Illinois higher education was undertaken jointly by the Governor and the Legislature. At that time, Illinois had two distinct public higher education systems: 1) the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Campus and the Medical Complex in Chicago; 2) five higher-learning institutions governed by the Teachers College Board--Northern Illinois State College at DeKalb, Eastern Illinois State Teachers College at Charleston, Western Illinois State Teachers College at Macomb, Illinois State Normal University at Normal, and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.
1949	Southern Illinois was removed from the Teachers College Board and was assigned its own Board of Trustees
1961	The Higher Education Act of 1961 established Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) as a central coordinating agency.
1965	The Teachers College Board was renamed the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities.
1967	Northern Illinois University and Illinois State University were removed from the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities and were governed by a newly established board, the Board of Regents. Chicago State College and Northeastern Illinois State College were governed by the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities. Sangamon State University at Springfield was established to be under the Board of Regents; Governors State University in South Chicago was under the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities.
1995	The Board of Regents and the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities were dissolved. Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Illinois State University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University and Western Illinois University have their own board of trustees. Sangamon State University was transferred to the University of Illinois and renamed the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Table A2. List of major events in the development process of public higher education in Thailand.

Year	Major events
Prior to 1954	There was no central coordinating agency in Thailand. Thailand had only five universities, all of which were attached to different ministries.
1954	College of Education was established under the Ministry of Education.
1956	The University Council was established under the Office of the Prime Minister. The University Council coordinated five universities. The College of Education was under the Ministry of Education.
1959	The National Education Council was established to take over the roles of the University Council.
1969	The revision of the National Education Council Act of 1969 degraded the role of the National Education Council in respect of higher education.
1972	The National Education Council was renamed as the National Education Commission. The government also transferred the authority and responsibilities concerning public universities to the Office of State Universities.
1975	Teachers Colleges under the Ministry of Education could offer the courses to the bachelor's degree level in education.
1977	The Office of State Universities was upgraded to the Ministry of University Affairs (MUA). MUA was in charge of supervising private universities and coordinating public universities (As of 2002, there are 24 public universities).
1984	Teachers Colleges were authorized to provide bachelor's degrees in various fields other than education.
1989	Rajamangala Institute of Technology under the Ministry of Education was upgraded from the Institution of Technology and Vocational Education to provide higher education in various fields.
1995	Teachers Colleges were renamed Rajabhai Institutes to reflect their new tasks in providing higher education.
1999	The National Education Act B.E. 2542 combined the management of basic education and higher education into one ministry, the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture. MUA's functions would be transferred to the Commission for Higher Education under the new ministry.
2002	The Thaksin government separates the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture into the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture.