

# Board Level Political Affiliations, Peer Comparisons, & Community College Trustee Demographics

A Presentation to the Governor's Commission on the Governance of Public Universities in North Carolina  
February 7, 2023



Note: Data in this presentation are provisional and subject to change.

# Content of Presentation

- General Overview
- Board Level Political Affiliations
- Comparing NC Boards to Peer Institutions
- Demographics of NC Community College Boards
- Key Takeaways

# Recap of December Meeting

- **Women are underrepresented** on UNC System boards of trustees relative to the general population and student enrollment. **Women make up over half of student enrollment** and the general population, **but only one quarter of the BOG** and only **one third of system trustees**.
- **People of color are underrepresented.** For the most part, fewer people of color serve as BOG members or institutional trustees than we would expect given UNC System enrollment demographics and the demographics of the state of North Carolina. **This is especially true for the state's nearly 1,000,000 Hispanic people, who are represented by only 2 trustees.**

# Recap of December Meeting

- **Republicans are overrepresented** on the BOG and among institutional trustees. Members of the GOP make up 2 out of every 3 BOG members, despite the fact that only 1 in 3 registered North Carolina voters are Republicans.
- The **institutional trustees appointed by the Speaker and President Pro Tempore are twice as likely to be Republican** than a voter drawn at random from the general population.
- Despite the fact that two-thirds of the BOG are Republicans, the **partisan distribution of trustees appointed by the BOG is very similar to the partisan distribution of North Carolina voters.**

# Recap of December Meeting

The Commission requested the following:

- **Institutional demographics related to political affiliation.**
- Comparisons of **UNC system institution boards** and **boards of other institutions.**
- Data on **community college boards.**

# Presenters for Today's Presentation

**Cody L. Christensen**



**Christopher R. Marsicano**



**Rylie C. Martin**





# Board Level Political Affiliation



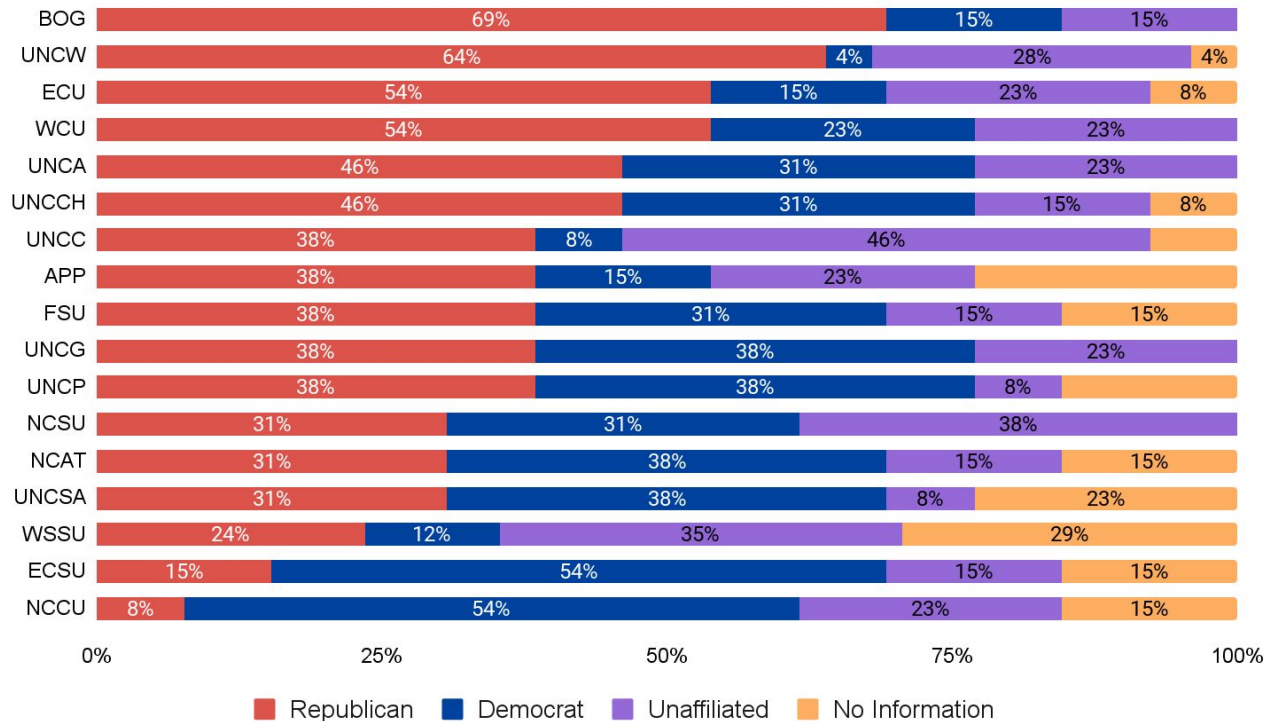
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# Political affiliation BOG and BOT

(As listed on North Carolina voter registration)

- **Three institutional boards** and the **Board of Governors** are majority **Republican**.

- **Two boards** (NCCU, ECSU) are majority **Democrat**.

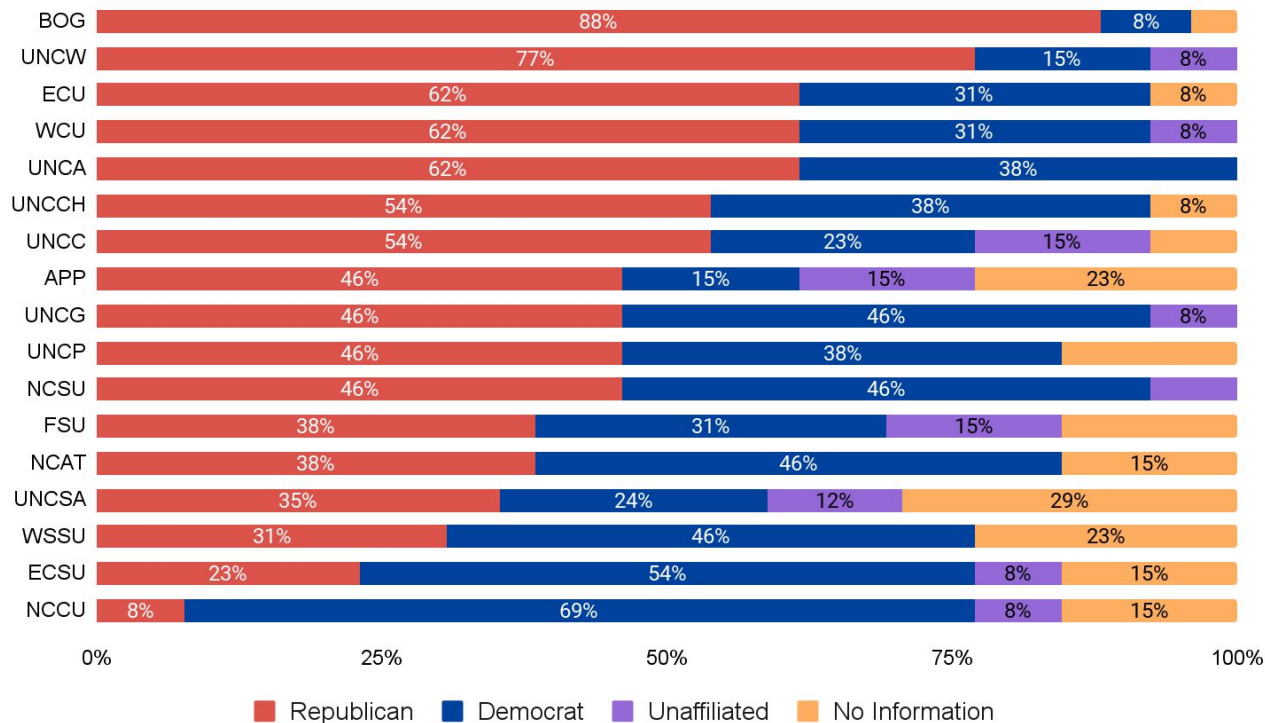




# Political affiliation BOG and BOT

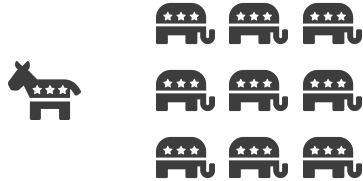
(Including Primary Votes, Excluding No Information)

- Adds **14 Democrats, 16 Republicans** to the boards.
- Changes the distribution dramatically.



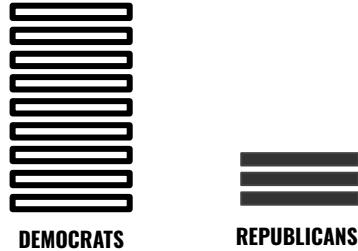
# Board Politics: Political Affiliation by Board

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS



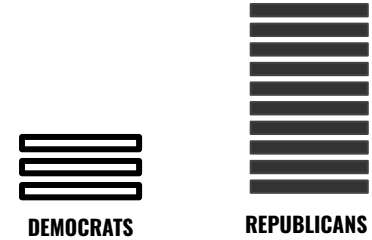
There is **one Democrat** for every **nine Republicans** on the BOG.

## NC A&T STATE



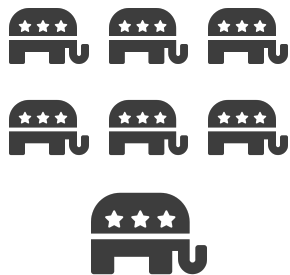
NC A&T is the most Democratic board with **9 out of 13 members** registered **Democrats** or voting in Democratic primaries.

## UNC-WILMINGTON



UNC-Wilmington has the most Republicans on its board, with **10 GOP members**, and only 3 non-GOP members.

# Board Politics: Political Affiliation by Board



# 50/50

**6 institutional boards** (UNCW, ECU, WCU, UNCA, UNCC, UNC-CH) and the **BOG** have **Republican majorities**.

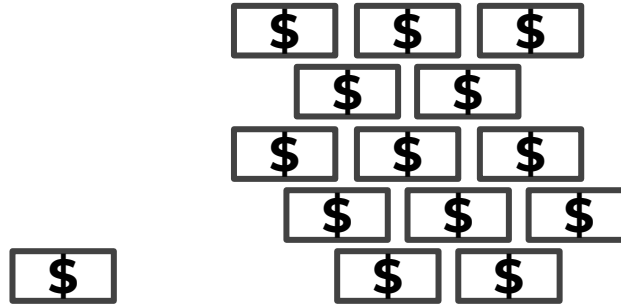
Just **two institutional boards** - NCCU and ECSU have **Democratic majorities**. Both are HBCUs.

Only **NCSU** and **UNCG** have an **even number** of **Republicans** and **Democrats** (defined as registered with a party or voting in that party's primary most recently).

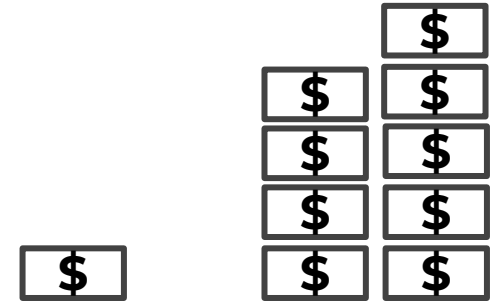
# Board Politics: Political Affiliation by Board

**\$117M**  
vs.  
**\$1.6B**

Appropriations to Democratic majority boards vs. Republican majority boards.



**\$13** spent on Republican majority board institutions for every **\$1** spent at Democratic majority board institutions.



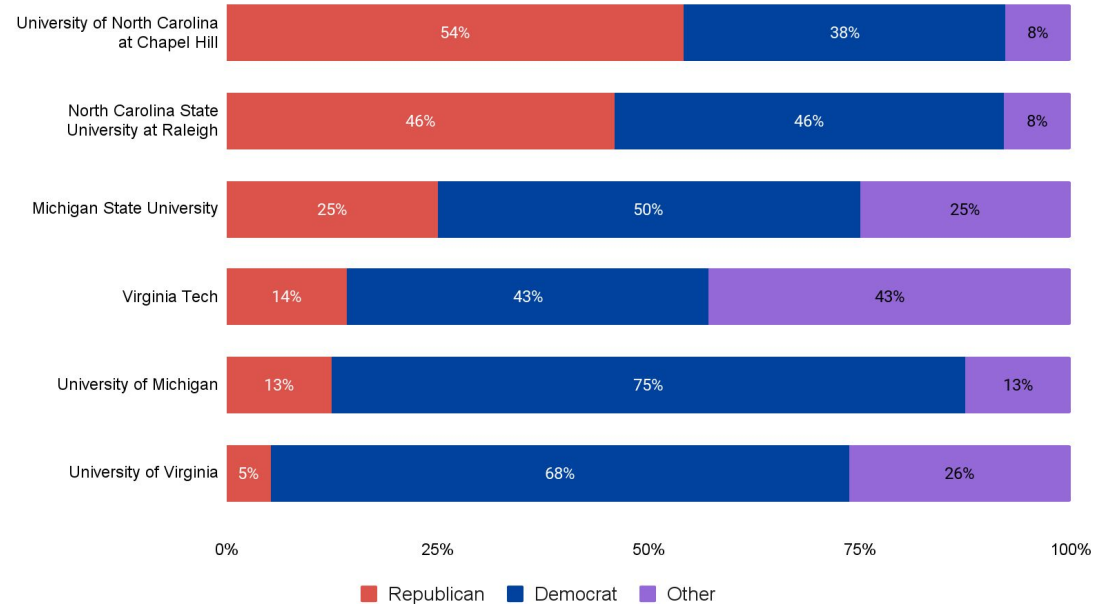
**\$9** spent on Republican majority board institutions for every **\$1** spent at Democratic majority board institutions, excluding UNC-CH.

# Board Politics: Comparing Peer Institutions

- **Politics difficult to compare across state lines.**
  - Most states do not have open voter registration records a la North Carolina.
- Some states have elected Trustees, e.g. Michigan.
- Workaround: **Campaign Donations**
  - Data from the Center for Responsive Politics

# Board Politics: Comparing Peer Institutions

- UNC-CH is the **only majority Republican** board in the comparison group.
- The **majority** of the Virginia Tech and Virginia boards were appointed by a **Democratic Governor**.
- **Not a true 1:1 comparison.**





# Comparing NC Boards to Peer Institutions



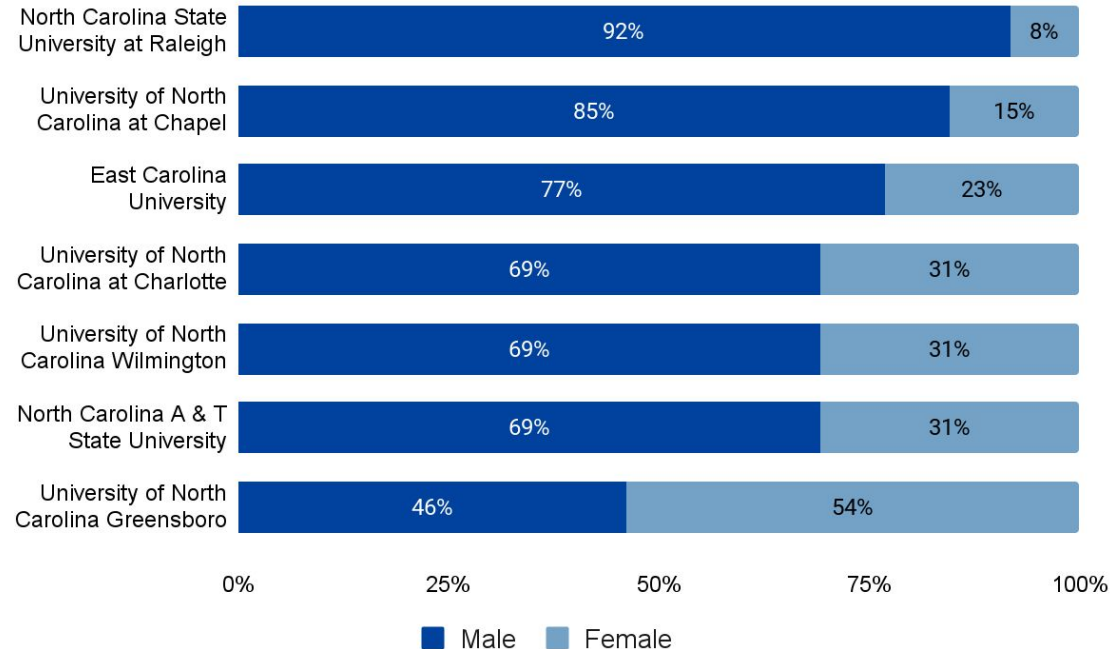
# Overview, Sample, and Data

- This analysis focuses on the **seven UNC universities** classified as **Research 1 or Research 2 institutions**.
  - These include: UNC Chapel Hill, UNC Charlotte, UNC Greensboro, UNC Wilmington, North Carolina State at Raleigh, North Carolina A&T State, and East Carolina University.
- We **compare** the demographic characteristics of board members at these universities **to each other and to their peer institutions**.
  - This analysis focuses on the race and gender characteristics of board members.
- Data on board member characteristics were collected during the **2021-22 academic year** by C2i between November 2021-April 2022.



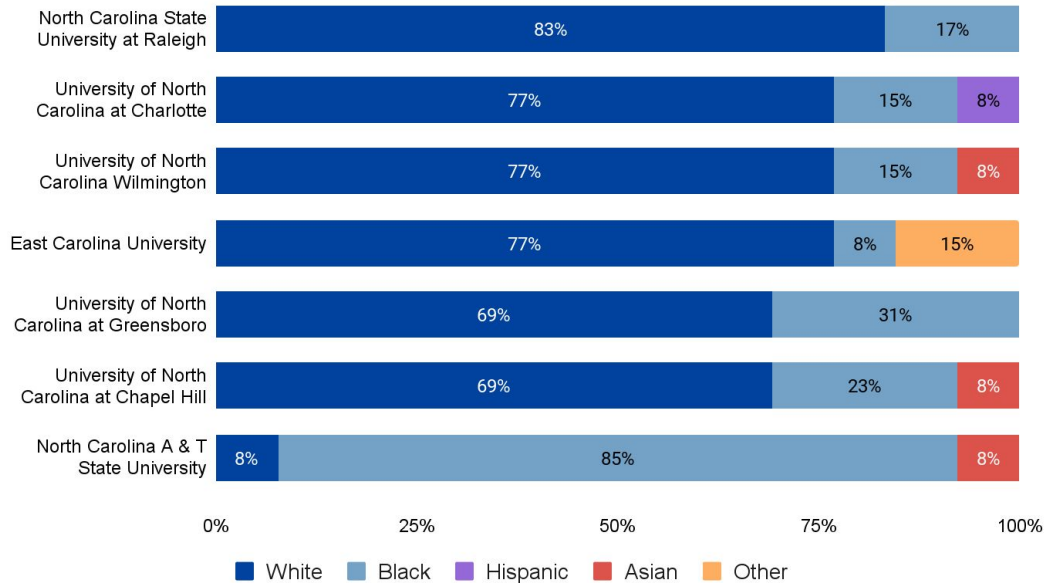
# Comparing UNC University Board Members: Gender

- Institution boards in the UNC system are **male-dominated**.
- Only UNC Greensboro had more female board members than males.
- The average board in UNC is **3:1 male**.



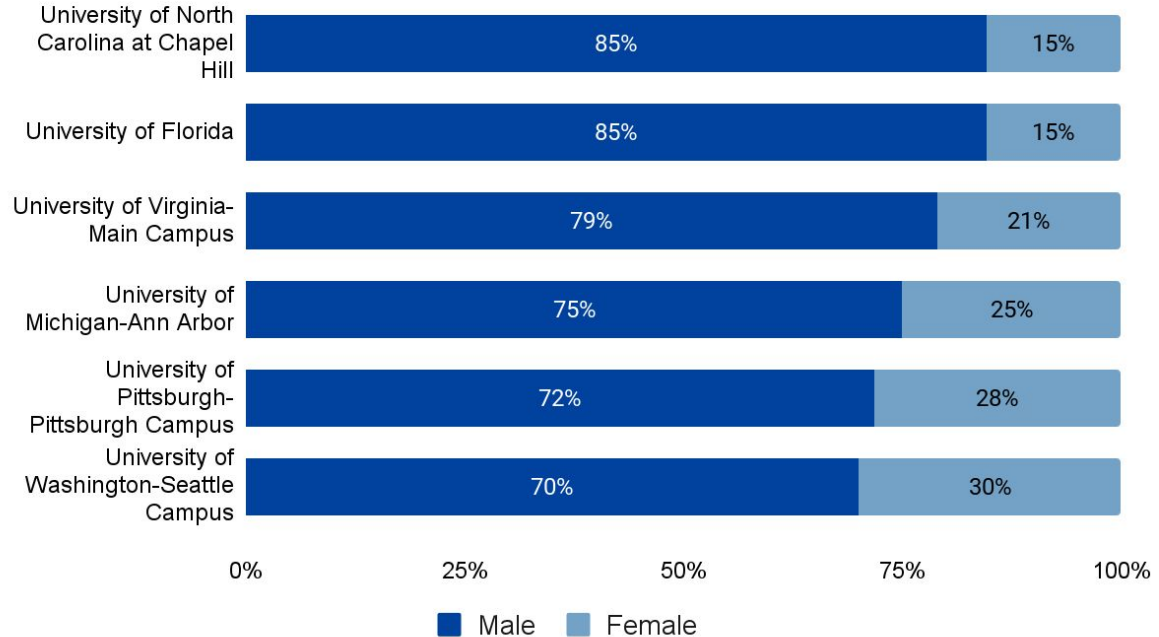
# Comparing UNC University Board Members: Race

- The **majority** of UNC board members are **White, Non-Hispanic**.
- One exception is the board of NC A&T State.
- In total, **UNC board members are 2:1 white**.
- Excluding NC A&T State, **UNC board members are 3:1 white**.



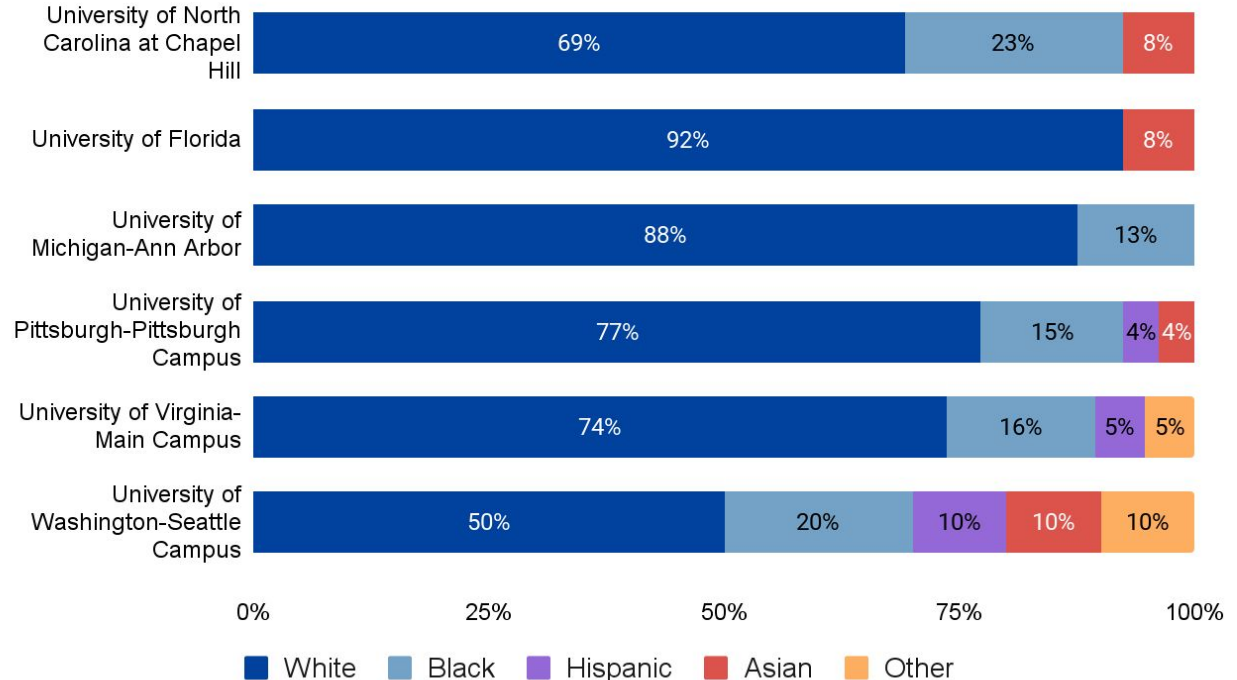
# Comparing UNC Chapel Hill to its Peers: Gender

The board of UNC Chapel Hill is **last** (tied) among its peer institutions in terms of **female representation**.



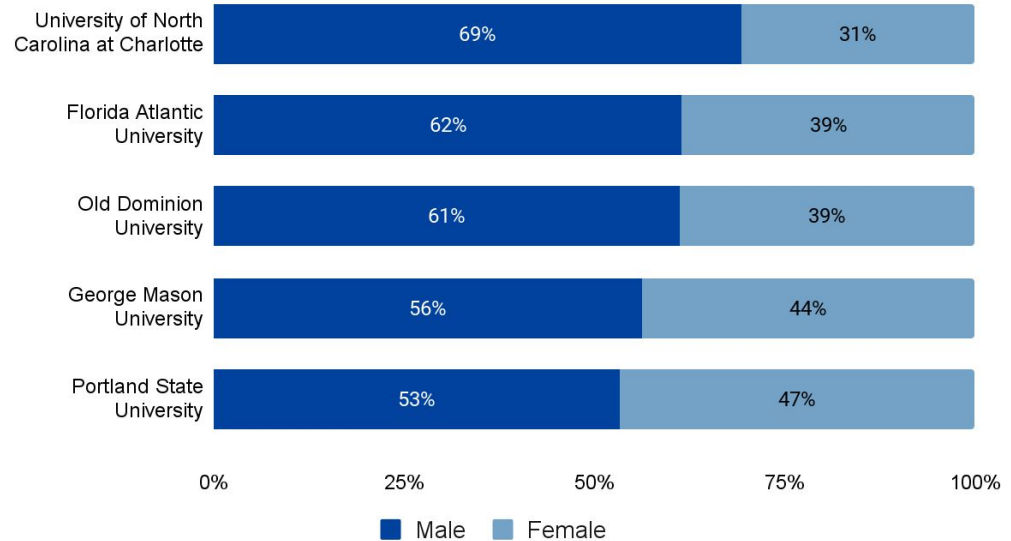
# Comparing UNC Chapel Hill to its Peers: Race

The board of UNC Chapel Hill has **greater racial diversity** than many of its peer institutions.



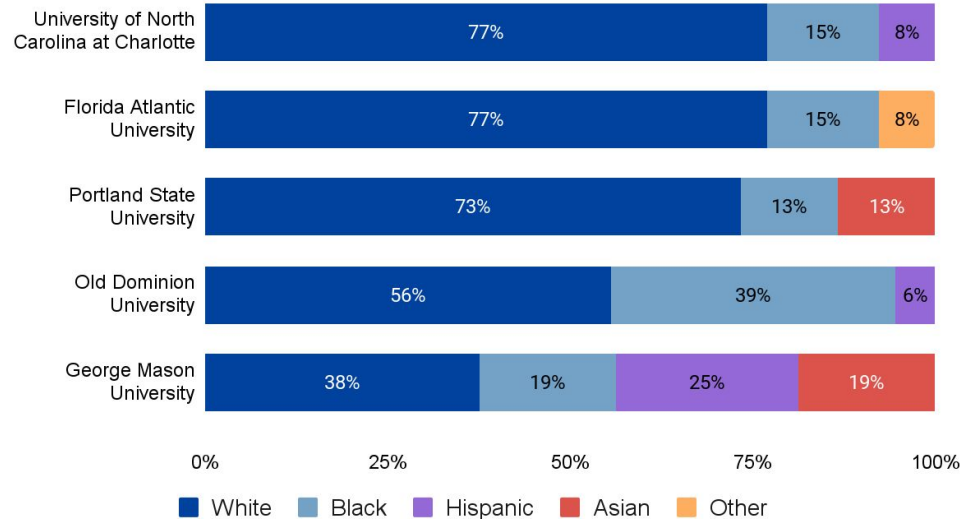
# Comparing UNC Charlotte to its Peers: Gender

- The board of UNC Charlotte **ranks last** among its peer institutions in terms of female representation.
- Nearly 7 in 10 board members at UNC Charlotte are male.



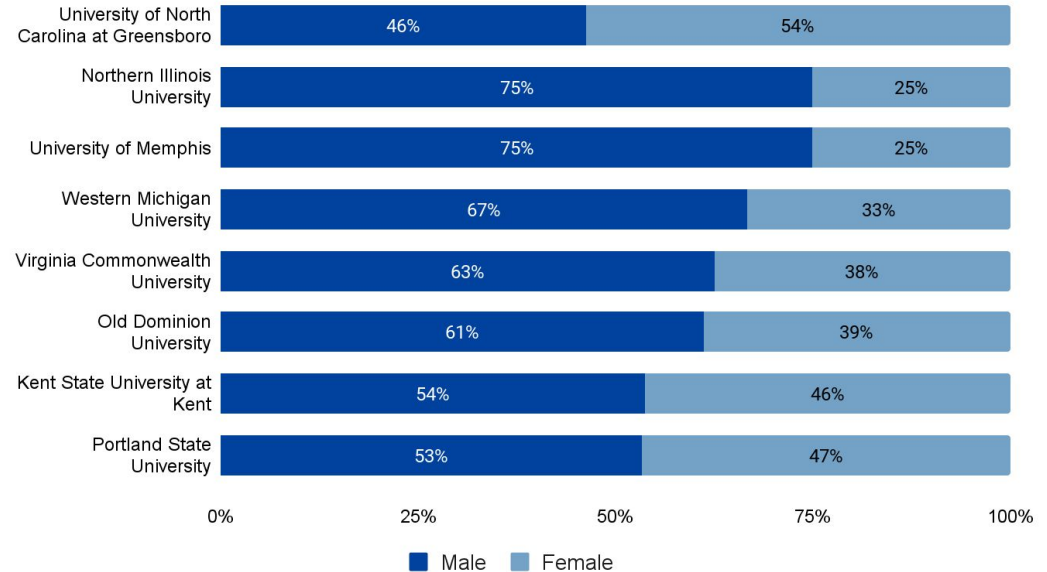
# Comparing UNC Charlotte to its Peers: Race

- The board of UNC Charlotte is **ranked last** (tied) in terms of racial diversity.
- 77% of board members at UNC Charlotte are White, Non-Hispanic.



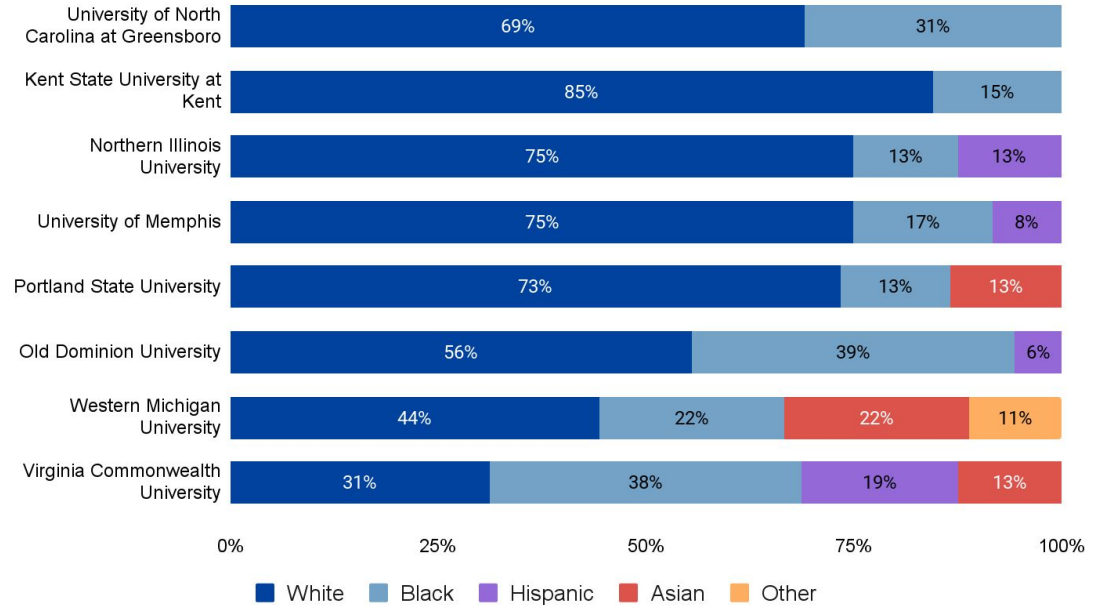
# Comparing UNC Greensboro to its Peers: Gender

- The board of UNC Greensboro has **exceptional female representation** relative to its peer institutions.
- Less than half (46%) of its board members are male.
- It is **first among the UNC System** in terms of female representation, and it is also **first among its peer institutions**.
- UNCG was originally a women's college



# Comparing UNC Greensboro to its Peers: Race

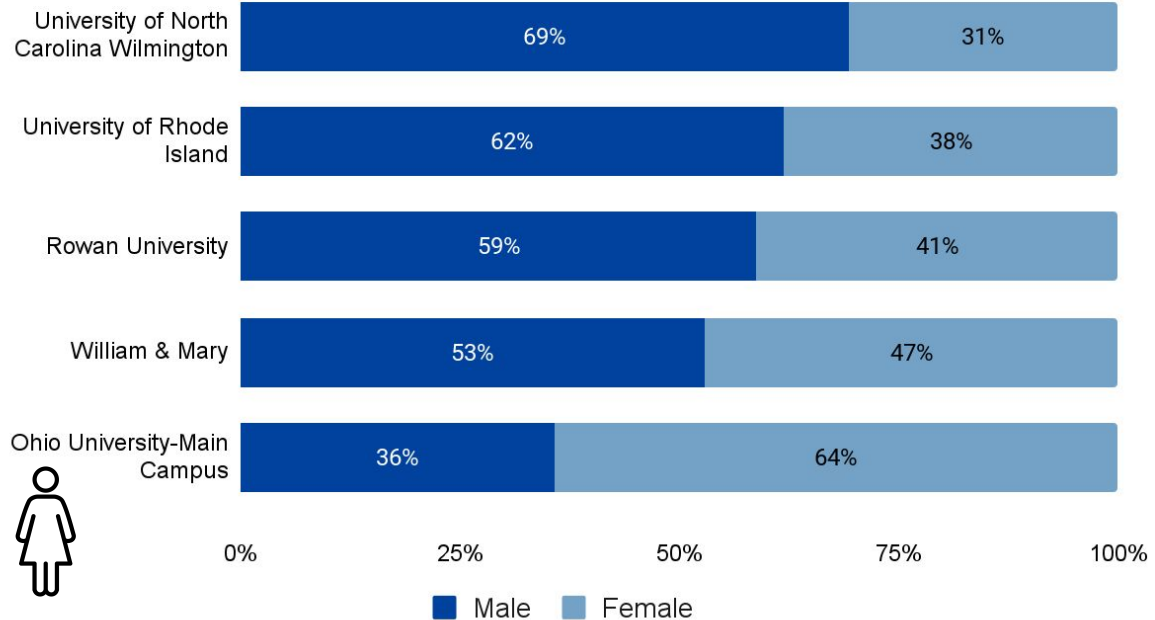
The board of UNC Greensboro is **middle-of-the-pack** in terms of racial diversity, ranking 4th out of 8 in terms of non-White representation.





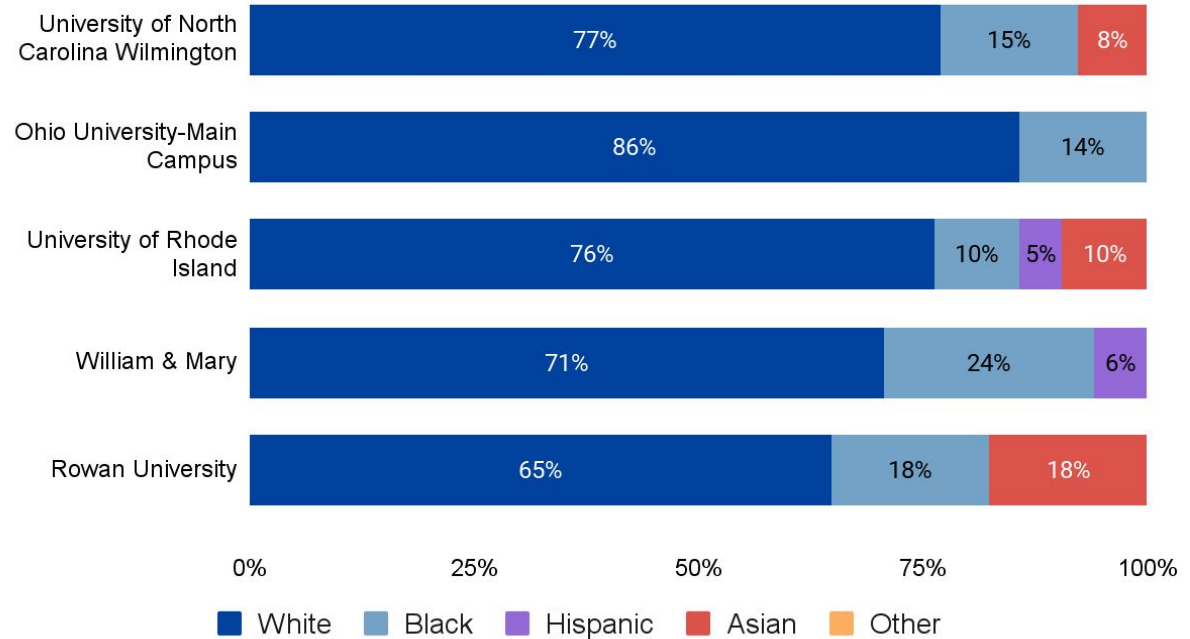
# Comparing UNC Wilmington to its Peers: Gender

- The board of UNC Wilmington **ranks last** among its peers in terms of female representation.
- Nearly 7 out of ten members are male.



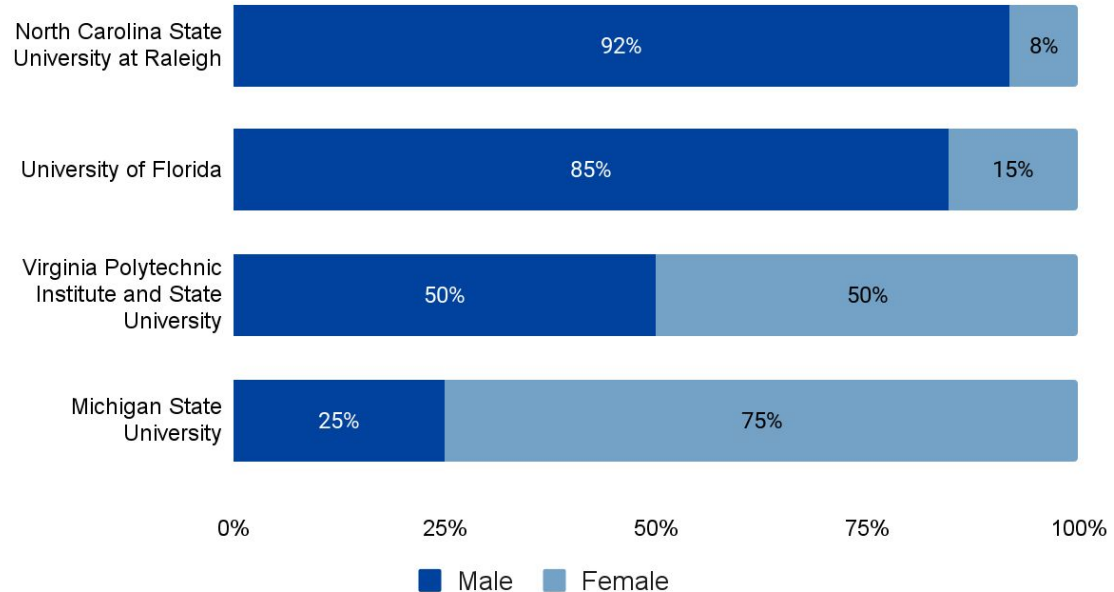
# Comparing UNC Wilmington to its Peers: Race

The board of UNC Wilmington ranks **second to last** among its peer institutions in terms of racial diversity.



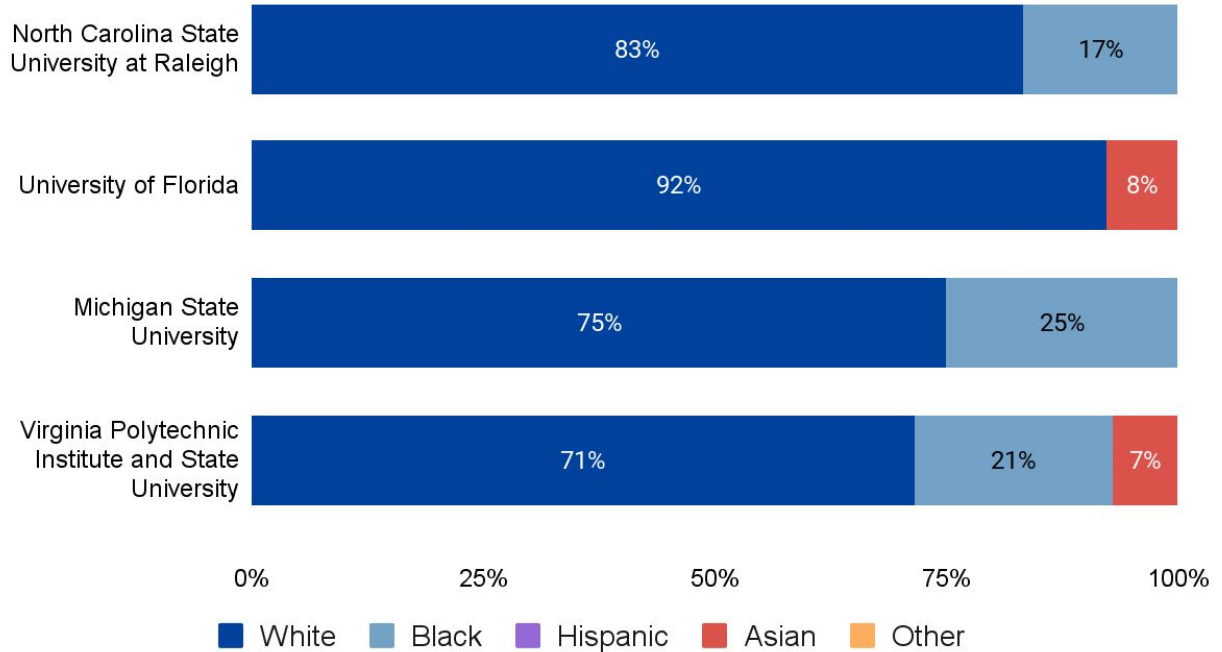
# Comparing NC State to its Peers: Gender

- The board of NC State only has a single female board member.
- It **ranks last** among its peers in terms of female representation, and it also ranks last among colleges in the UNC System



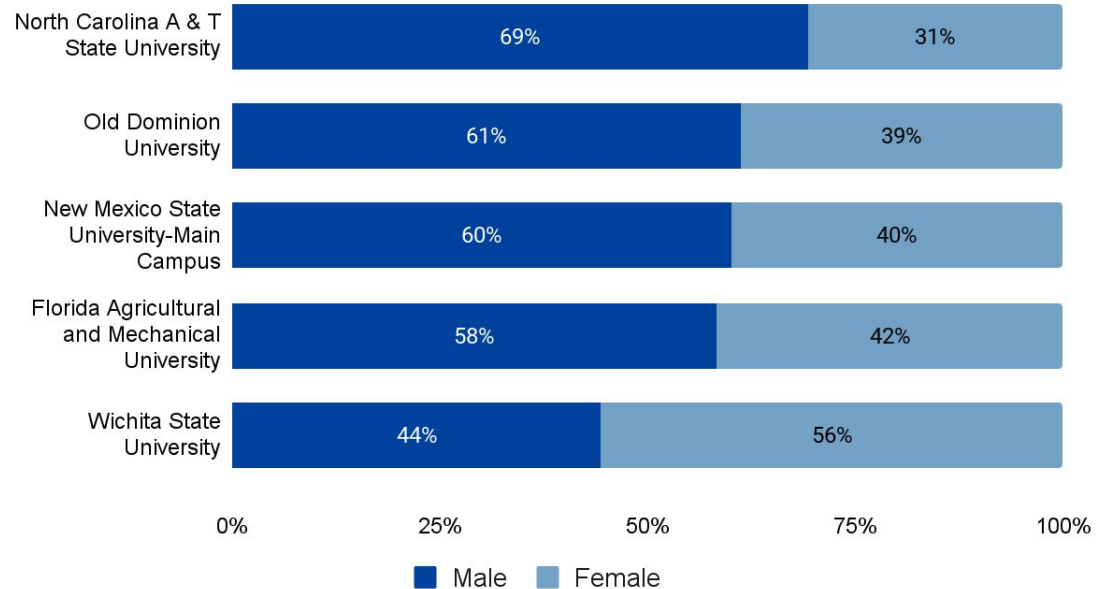
# Comparing NC State to its Peers: Race

- The board of NC State is comprised of mostly White, Non-Hispanic members.
- It ranks **second to last** among its peers in terms of **racial representation** on its board.



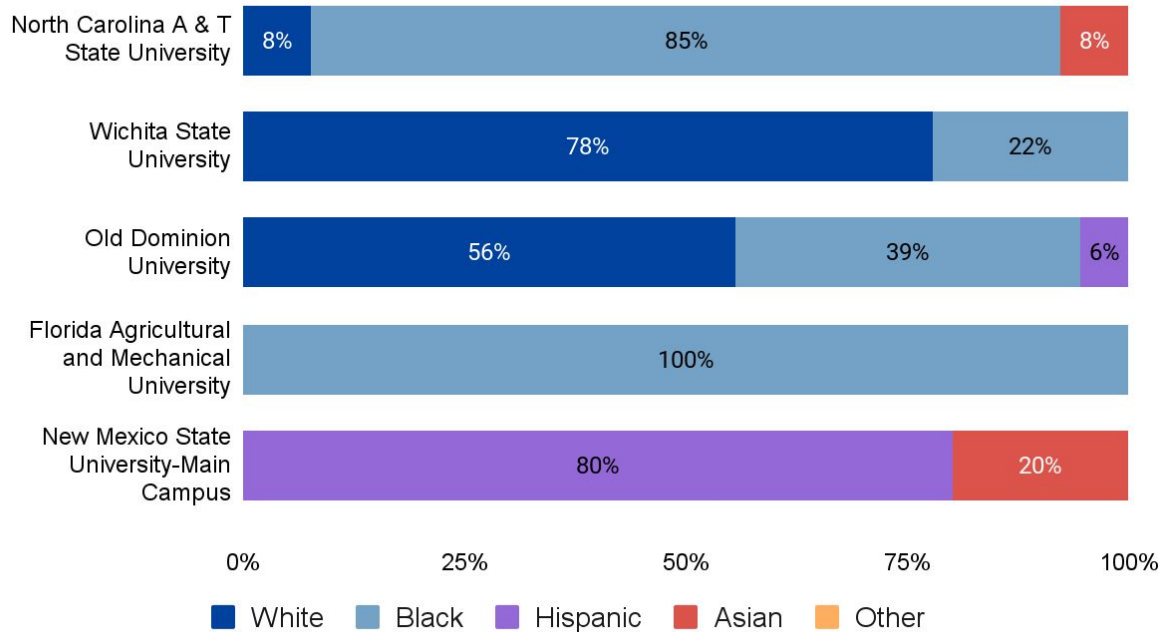
# Comparing NC A&T to its Peers: Gender

- The board of NC A&T State **ranks last** among its peer institutions in terms of **female representation**.
- Nearly seven out of 10 members on the NC A&T State board are male.



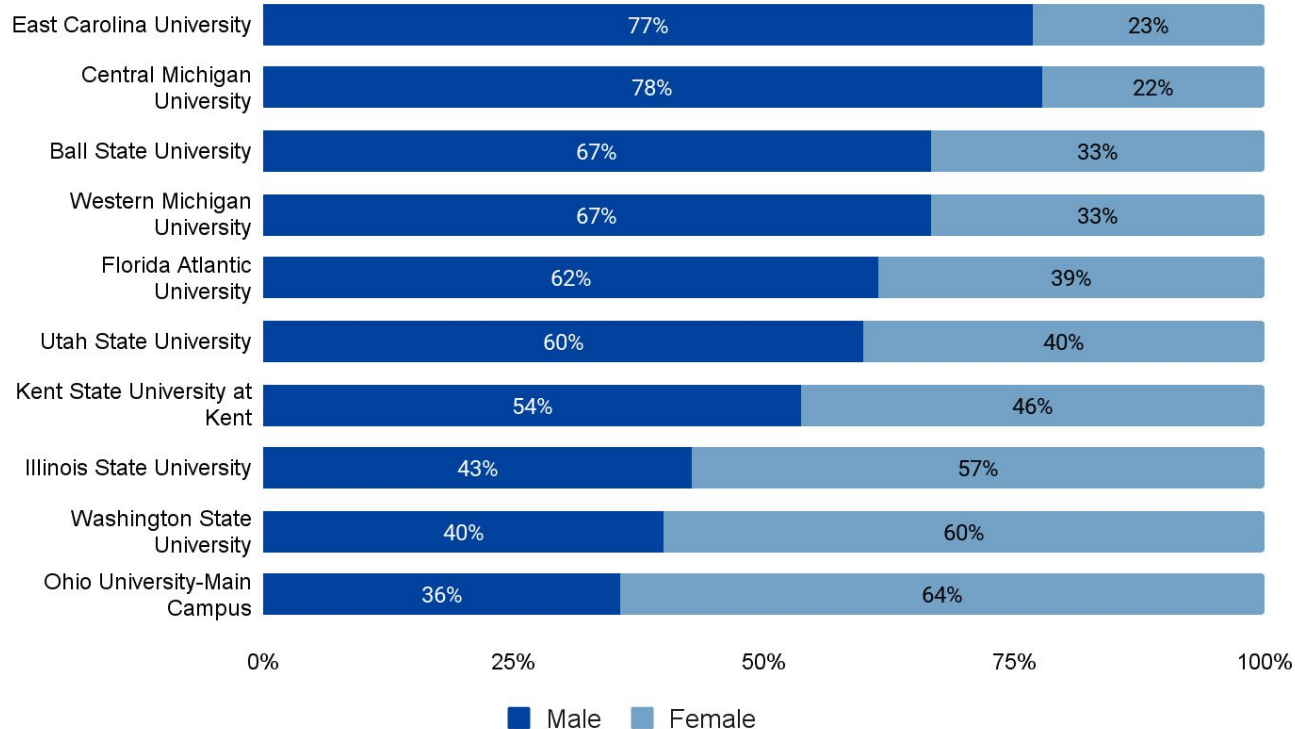
# Comparing NC A&T to its Peers: Race

- The board of NC A&T State has **a large share (92%) of non-White members.**
- In general, its peer institutions also have racially-diverse boards.
- Note that **NC A&T State** (and many of its peers) **is an HBCU.**



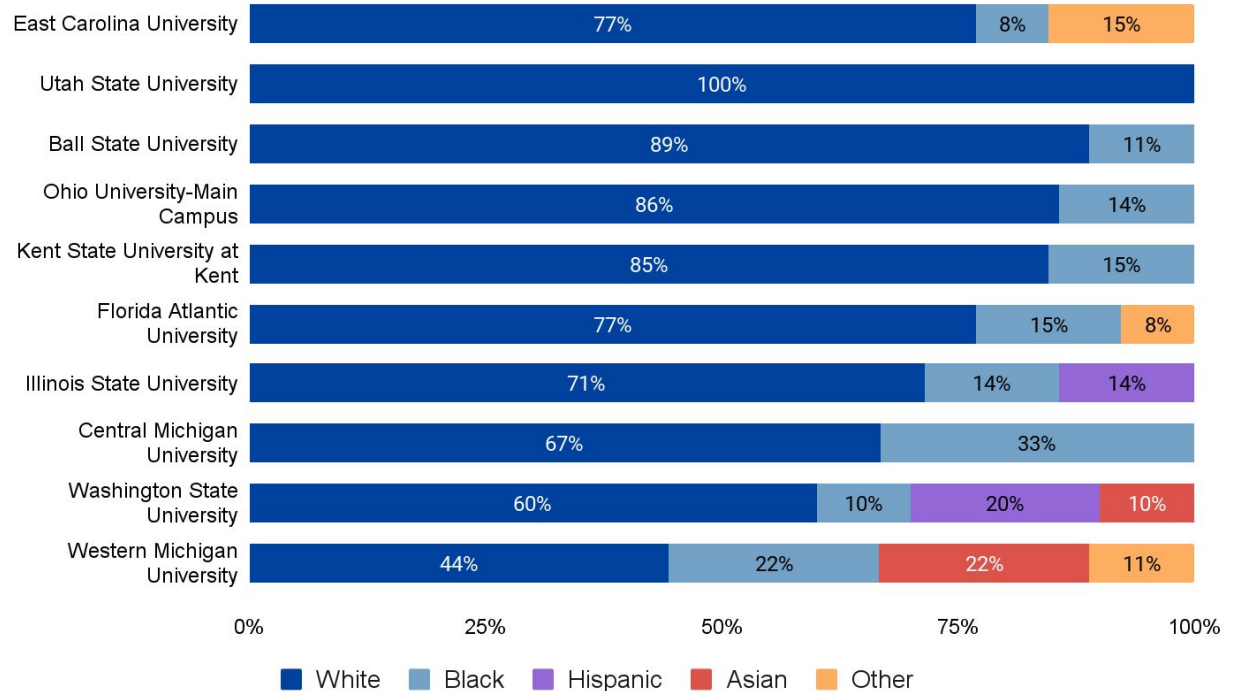
# Comparing ECU to its Peers: Gender

The board of East Carolina is ranked **second to last** among its peers in terms of **female representation**.



# Comparing ECU to its Peers: Race

The board of East Carolina is **middle-of-the-pack** in terms of non-White racial representation, ranking 6th out of 10 among its peer institutions.





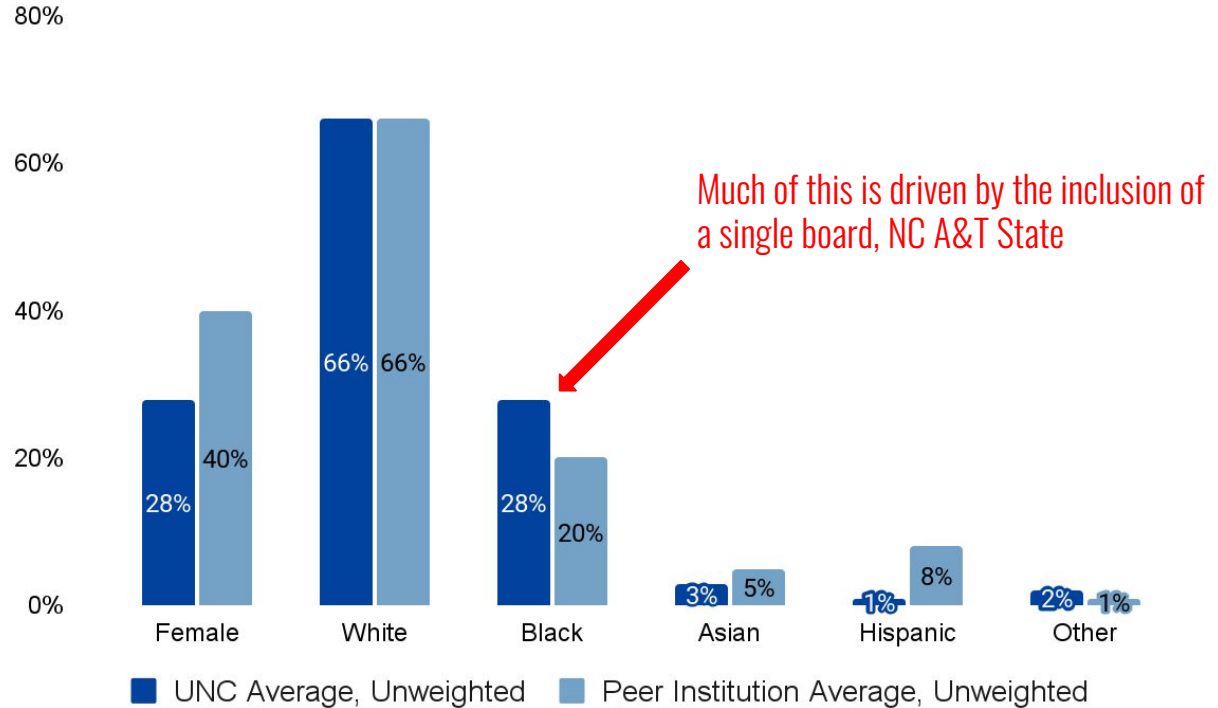
# Summary: How do the characteristics of UNC boards rank against their peers?

University	Number of institutions in Peer Group	Gender Diversity Rank among peer Institutions	Racial Diversity Rank among Peer Institutions
East Carolina University	10	Ranks 9th out of 10	Ranks 6th out of 10
North Carolina A&T State University	5	Ranks 5th out of 5	Ranks 3rd out of 5
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	6	Ranks 6th out of 6	Ranks 2nd out of 6
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	5	Ranks 5th out of 5	Ranks 5th out of 5
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	8	Ranks 1st out of 8	Ranks 4th out of 8
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	4	Ranks 4th out of 4	Ranks 3rd out of 4
University of North Carolina Wilmington	5	Ranks 5th out of 5	Ranks 4th out of 5

Note: Values highlighted in **green** indicate the institution board ranks first or second out of the group of public institutions listed as peers with governing boards. Values highlighted in **red** indicate the institution board ranks last or second to last out of the group of public institutions listed as peers with governing boards.

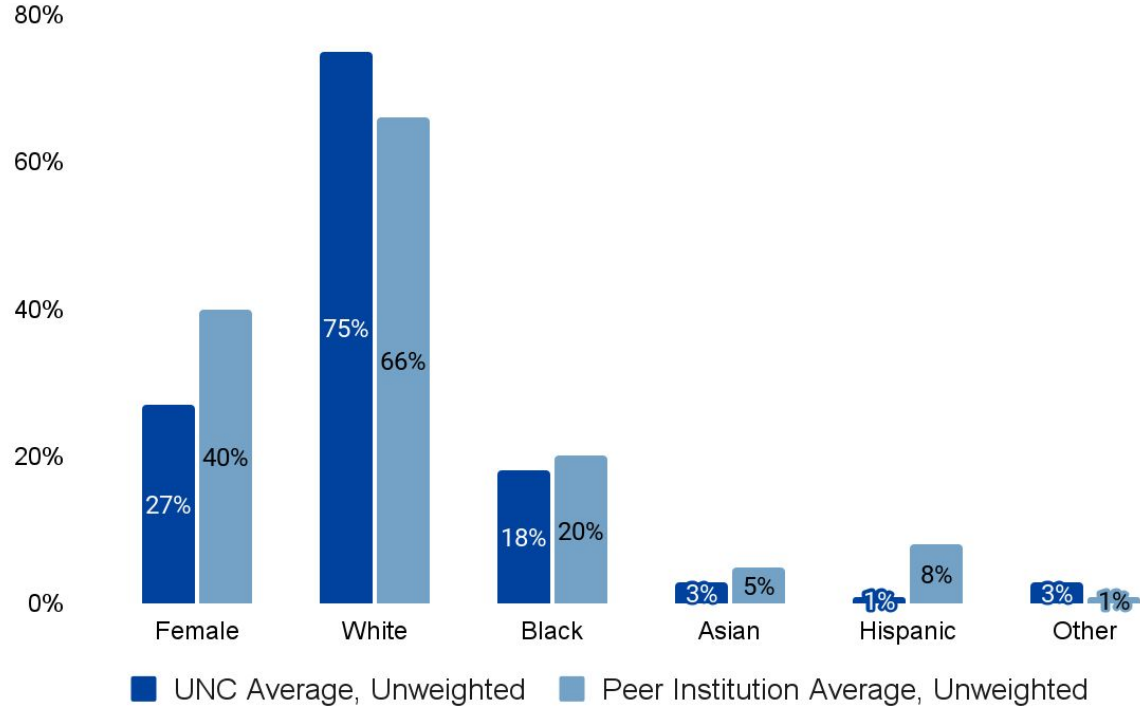
# How does the UNC System fair as a group compared to its peers?

On average, the seven R1 & R2 institutions in the UNC system have smaller proportions of female and Hispanic board members, equivalent proportions of White board members, and larger proportions of Black board members.



# Excluding NC A&T State

When NC A&T State is excluded, the R1 & R2 institutions in the UNC system have smaller proportions of female, Black, and Hispanic board members, and larger proportions of White board members relative to their peer institutions.





# Demographics of NC Community College Boards



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# Overview of NC State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC)

- The NC State Board of Community Colleges consists of 22 total members (**21 voting members**).
- **Ex-officio** members:
  - The Treasurer of North Carolina or the Treasurer's designee
  - The Commissioner of Labor or the Commissioner's designee
  - The Lieutenant Governor
- The Governor appoints **4 members from the state**, and one member from each of the **6 Trustee Association Regions**.
- The General Assembly elects **8 members** (4 elected by the House, 4 by the Senate).
- The person serving as president of the North Carolina Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the State Board.



# Overview of Institutional Boards

- There are **58** community colleges in North Carolina.
- Each community college's board has **13 members** (they may have additional members if the institution has satellite campuses). The average in the C2i dataset is 14 members.
- **4 trustees** are elected by the **board of education** of the public school board in the administrative area of the institution.
- **4 trustees** are elected by the **board of commissioners** of the county in which the community college is located.
- **4 trustees** are appointed by the **Governor**.
- **1 trustee** is the president of the student government and serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member.



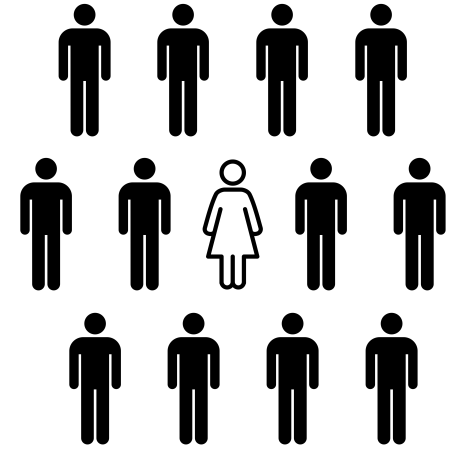
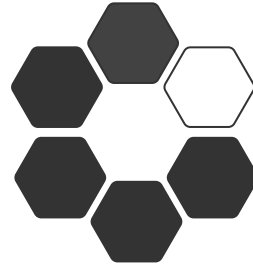
# Board Demographics: Sex/Gender



**NCSBCC Board of Trustees**



**Campus Board of Trustees**



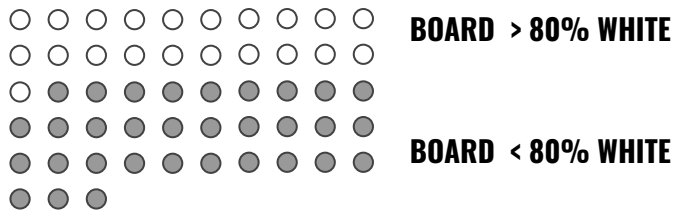
Almost **70%** of **SBCC** members are **male**, and over **6/10 (62%)** of the **institutional board of trustees** are **male**.

There are only **10** **institutional boards** out of **58** in which the percentage of females is greater than **50%**

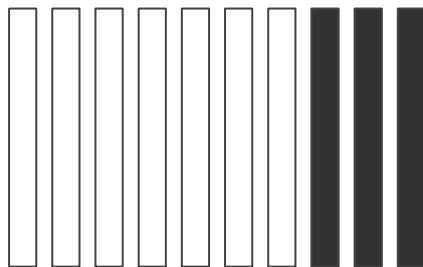
**All but one** of the trustees at **Tri-County Community College** are men.



# Board Demographics: Race



Out of the 58 institutional boards, **21 are 80% or more White.**



Around **70%** of both the SBCC trustee members and institutional board members are **White.**



**ASIAN BOARD MEMBERS**

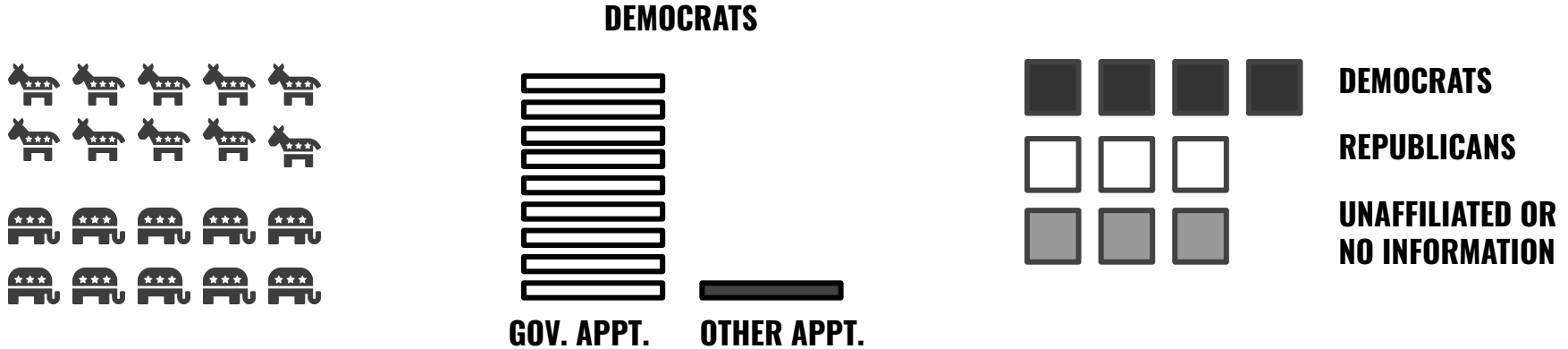


**HISPANIC BOARD MEMBERS**

Out of 790 total institutional trustee members, there are only **8 Asian** and **11 Hispanic** board members.



# Board Demographics: Political Affiliation



The SBCC is **evenly split** between registered Democrats (45%) and Republicans (45%).

**9 of the 10** Democrats on the SBCC were appointed by the Governor.

**4 out of 10** (41%) institutional board members are **Democrats**, while **3 out of 10** (31%) institutional board members are **Republicans**.

# Comparing Community Colleges with NC System Universities

- The **Governor** is allowed to appoint community college board members, but may not appoint members to the system universities.
  - The Governor is slightly more likely than County Commissioners or Boards of Education to appoint a non-white voting member to the community college board of trustees.
- **Women and people of color are generally underrepresented** on community college board of trustees and university board of trustees.
- There is only **one (4%) Democrat** on the NC BOG, compared to **ten (45%)** on the State Board of Community Colleges.





# Key Takeaways



# Key Takeaways - Politics by Institution

- **Republicans are a majority on six institutional boards and the Board of Governors. Democrats are the majority on only two boards.** The rest have no majority.
- **Only two** boards - UNCG and NCSU - **have equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans.**
- UNC-CH and NC State are **more Republican** than select peer institutions. UVA, Virginia Tech, Michigan, and Michigan State are all **more Democratic** than UNC-CH and NCSU.
  - Michigan and Michigan State have elected board positions.
  - The majority of UVA and Virginia Tech board members were appointed by a Democratic Governor.



# Key Takeaways - Peer Group Comparisons

- UNC System boards have **less gender and racial diversity** than their peers.
- **Only UNCG led** its peer group **in board gender diversity**. **UNC-CH** ranked highly in board **racial diversity**.
- All other R1 and R2 institutions are at or near **the bottom of their peer group in either racial diversity, gender diversity, or both**.

# Key Takeaways - Community Colleges

- The State Board and community college boards are both **majority male**.
- The State Board and community college boards are also **majority white**, both at around 70%
  - Hispanic and Asian trustee members at institutional boards are particularly underrepresented.
- The State Board is **evenly split** between registered Democrats and Republicans. The institutional boards are also relatively even, with 41% as registered Democrats and 31% registered Republicans.



@C2Initiative

@ChrisMarsicano

@Rylie\_Martin\_

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@SeeChristensen



Questions & Comments Welcome



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<https://collegecrisis.org/>

[c2i@davidson.edu](mailto:c2i@davidson.edu)

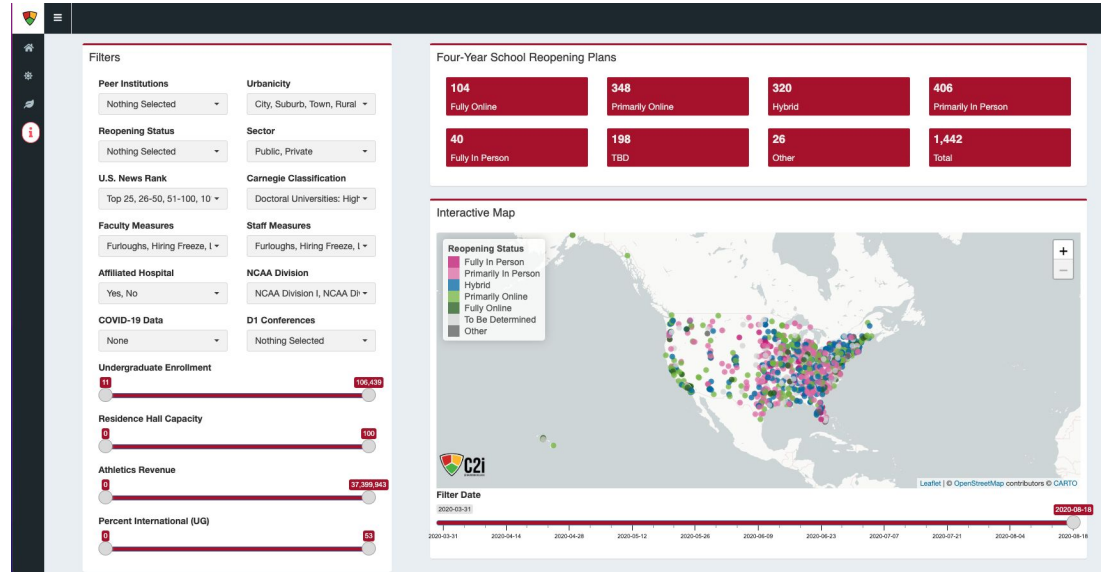
# Collection Methodology

- C2i collected demographic information from the NC Board of Governors and NC State Board of Community Colleges website, institutional web pages, and news announcements.
- Race and gender were determined using bios and photos (C2i used the Census categories for race and gender).
- Political affiliation information came from the NC Voter Search database.
- C2i validated the race and gender of the board member using the demographic information provided in the NC Voter Search database.
- Community college data were collected from January 5-February 7, 2023.



# About C2i

- C2i is a student-oriented research lab at Davidson College dedicated to understanding how colleges and universities respond and innovate during crisis.
- C2i currently employs 32 undergraduate student employees who act as data collectors, policy analysts, and data scientists.
- 12 peer-reviewed publications using C2i data in the last year
- 5 data collections on COVID-19/public health, infrastructure, natural disasters, and equity & governance this semester



# About Davidson College

“Davidson's primary purpose is to help students develop humane instincts and disciplined, creative minds for lives of leadership and service in an interconnected and rapidly changing world.”

- 1,973 undergraduate students
- 21 men's and women's NCAA D1 sports teams
- Top producer of Fulbright students for 7 years

