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Biography of Richard M. Freeland

Richard M. Freeland (1941-)
Northeastern University

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Biography of Richard M. Freeland

Richard M. Freeland has been president of Northeastern University since September 1996. Under his leadership, Northeastern has focused on achieving excellence as a national research university that is student-centered, practice-oriented and urban.

President Freeland has emphasized Northeastern's leadership in practice-oriented education by enhancing the university's flagship program of cooperative education and strengthening links between co-op and classroom in both professional fields and the arts and sciences. Freeland has announced Northeastern's intention to be recognized among the top 100 national universities within the first decade of the 21st century.



Freeland has spent his entire academic career in urban higher education. As assistant to the president of the University of Massachusetts in 1970, he focused on the development of a new campus in Boston. For the next 22 years, he was associated with UMass-Boston, serving consecutively as assistant to the chancellor, director of the Office of Educational Planning, founding dean of the College of Professional Studies and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. In 1992 Freeland became vice chancellor for academic affairs at the City University of New York, the country's largest urban system of public higher education. In addition to his role as vice chancellor, Freeland served as president of the CUNY Research Foundation, managing grants and contracts totaling approximately \$150 million annually.

An American historian, Freeland is the author of two books, "Academia's Golden Age," a post-World War II history of universities in Massachusetts, published in 1992, and "The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism," published in 1972. He has received research support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation, as well as the Rockefeller Foundation's scholar in residence in Bellagio, Italy. He has been a visiting scholar at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a visitor at the Harvard Business School.

Freeland is vice-chair of the Board of Trustees for the Boston Plan for Excellence. He is a director of the American Council on Education, the Boston Museum Project, the Boston Private Industry Council, Globe Newspaper Corporation (Boston Globe), Jobs for Massachusetts, and serves as a Governing Board member of the John Adams Innovation Institute (Mass Technology Collaborative). He has served on the Board of Trustees of WGBH since 1996. He is a member of CEO's for Cities and the Treasurer's Office Job Growth Task Force. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, is a Goldberg Seminar Co-chair of the Boston Foundation, and President of the Board of Governors in the World Association of Cooperative Education. He has received honorary degrees from Amherst College and from the American College of Greece.

Born and raised in Mountain Lakes, N.J., Freeland received a bachelor's degree in American Studies from Amherst College in 1963 and a doctorate in American Civilization from the University of Pennsylvania in 1968. From 1963 to 1964, he studied at the University of Bristol, England, on an Amherst Memorial Fellowship.

Freeland's wife, Elsa Nunez, is vice chancellor for academic and student affairs for the University of Maine System. She received a doctorate in linguistics from Rutgers University in 1979, and is widely published in the areas of language acquisition and the retention of disadvantaged students. The couple have two children, Antony, a graduate of Lesley University, and Maria, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, who is attending medical school at George Washington University.

▶ See President Freeland's [curriculum vitae](#).