Western Academic Leadership Forum

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The Forum’s Annual Meeting
April 24, 2014
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What’s Up At the Federal Level
Federal Postsecondary Policy -- the American Way

What The Constitution Says About This Or doesn’t

Tenth Amendment
“The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people”
Federal Postsecondary Policy -- the American Way

- And thus,
  - Education, not being mentioned in the constitution is not a federal responsibility
  - Or, is it

*The Declaration of Independence*

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness”
Federal Postsecondary Policy -- the American Way

- The basis for today’s federal policy
  - This “responsibility” to provide equal opportunity to education because education is the way protect life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
  - The federal interest
    - Economic development
    - National security
  - Government efficiency
    - Programs need to work
The Current Federal Agenda

Four Major Venues

- Educating America
- The Workforce Agenda
- The Research Agenda
- Education As a Bi-product or Beneficiary
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Policy
  - Reauthorization
  - Too Important to Wait for Reauthorization
    - The Bully Pulpit
    - Explicit proposals

- Programs
  - Regulations
  - Program changes
  - The Bully Pulpit
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Policy – Reauthorization
  - Mixed signals from Congress
    - Retiring Leaders Want to move forward
    - But not much action
  - No urgency from Administration
    - New team not quite in place
    - No “plan” implicit in budget or actions
  - Extensive “Community” activity
    - Papers and proposals abound
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Policy – Reauthorization
  - What “I” think you will see
  - No more money
  - Substantial revision to target aid
  - A new concept of partnership
    - All partners with a stake in the game
      - Feds sustain funding, but with performance expectations.
        - Of states
        - Of institutions
        - Of students
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Policy – Reauthorization
  - Why this thrust?
    - Economic Imperative
    - Societal Imperative
    - Program Expansion has not wrought ROI expected
  - So, touches on:
    - Assuring opportunity
    - Economic development
    - Program effectiveness
- Presumption of Limited Resources
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Policy – Too Important to Wait
  - Use of the Bully Pulpit
    - President:
      - Need alternative to Accreditation
      - Innovation is good
  - Congress:
    - Mixed – but strong support for new providers
  - Higher Ed Associations: following Dilbert: “Change Is Good, You Go First”
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Policy – Too Important to Wait
  - Explicit Proposals
    - President/Administration
      - Ratings (not rankings)
      - Consumer Information Initiatives
      - Support of Information Systems (State SURDS)
      - Support of competency based institutions
  - Congress
    - Ryan’s budget – less is more. Fewer programs, fewer dollars
    - Mixed signals on National SURDS
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue I: Educating America

- Programs
  - Rules and Regulations
    - Current NegReg– State Authorization, etc.
    - New Proposed Regs on Gainful Employment
  - Program Changes
    - Reconsidering summer Pell
    - Reconsidering Parent Loans (PLUS)
    - Pay as You Earn – revised loan repayment
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue II: The Workforce Agenda

- Trade Adjustment Assistance and Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Program.
  - $2 Billion over Four Years
  - 4\textsuperscript{th} contribution -- $450 million – currently being competed
  - Institution based, not student based
- Why
  - Economic Development
  - Educational Opportunity
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue III: The Research Agenda

- Contrary to Modern Thought, Research Funding has been sustained -- $30 Billion +/-
- Why the perception of significant cuts
  - Shifts in areas of emphasis -- to NIH, not NSF, Physics
  - Shift from Academic to Non-Academic (9%) 
  - Elimination of Earmarks
  - Loss as share of GDP
  - Hefty Appetite
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue IV: The Other Guys

- Military and Veterans Benefits
  - Funding secure
  - Becoming more regulatory (state authorization, program participation agreements)
- Other Income Support Agencies
  - Agriculture – Food stamps
  - HHS – TANF (Education averse)
  - GI Benefits as a partner
- IRS
  - Loan Repayment
The Current Federal Agenda
Venue IV: The Other Guys

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
  - Broadband:
    - E-rate
    - The National Broadband Plan
  - Good News
    - 2010 Plan
    - Development of Internet II
  - The Rest of the Story
    - Not Much
    - NLR – defunct
    - WRN healthy, but some of the parts . . .
So,

- An awful lot going on
  - Within Congress
  - Within the Administration
    - Within many parts of the Administration, part particularly within ED
- Number of Actors
  - Within Government
  - Outside: Higher Ed Orgs, Foundations, Think Tanks, Non-thought Tanks, Interest Groups
So,

- Will be noisy
- But will lead to change
  - We must for people involved
  - We must considering the New Normal of government finance
  - We must because the programs can be improved
  - We will because innovation is good, or so they say.
In the end, though, remember

State Policy Is Where the Real Action Is Taking Place