



THE SYSTEM CONNECTION

Greetings:

It's become a parlor game for many of us in higher education since the presidential election to predict how federal policies and practices might change under the Trump administration.

When it seemed all-but-inevitable that Hillary would be elected, the conventional wisdom was that a President Clinton would pretty much continue both the actions and activism around HIED from the Obama Department of Education -- on such issues as campus sexual assault; the gainful employment rule, which (rightly) hit the for-profit institutions especially hard; data transparency and accountability, as embodied in the [College Scorecard](#); and a variety of other major initiatives.

Candidate Trump offered few clues during the campaign as to his thinking about the postsecondary arena -- and this continued through the transition period, certainly. His nominee for Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, is widely known for promoting charter schools and school vouchers in the K-12 world; however, we know precious little about her views on higher education, and we gained few insights from her first round of Senate confirmation hearing testimony.

But given the election results, here is some of what we might expect to see from the federal government during the Trump years:

- **The oversight role of the Department of Education:** During the campaign, Trump did call for the elimination of the department, and he said he wanted to reduce burdensome regulations as part of his higher education proposals. That could mean, for example, changes to how the agency addresses sexual violence on college campuses. Under the Obama administration, the Education Department's Office of Civil Rights issued its famous "Dear Colleague" letter and became much more assertive with enforcement of Title IX, using that law to create an expanded compliance mechanism ... though without clear administrative regulations to guide colleges and universities on how to respond. We may now see a rolling back of institutional responsibilities, with the investigation and disposition of campus sexual assault cases resting with law enforcement. It's also probably a safe bet to expect significantly less oversight of for-profit institutions, a key area of focus under President Obama. Thus, we may unfortunately be going back to the wild west days in that industry, breathing new life into those rip-off institutions which the feds were finally able to close these past couple of years (think Corinthian Colleges ... ITT ... Career Colleges of America ... Westwood College ... et al).
- **Student loans:** This was one topic Candidate Trump did address specifically, saying he would cap income levels that can be used for loan repayment at 12.5 percent, compared to 10 percent currently. His proposal would additionally call for loans to be forgiven after 15 years of repayment. What is less clear is his position on inviting private lenders back into the student loan system again, replacing the federal government's Direct Loan Program. The DLP removed private banks and financial institutions from a middleman role, helping hold down the costs for originating and maintaining student loans. However, that revenue source was a lucrative one for many banks involved the student loan business, so we'll need to watch for developments on that front. (By some estimates, when Obama's Department of Education organized all new loans under the Direct Loan Program in 2010, over \$5 billion in savings for students and families was achieved.)
- **Accountability:** Trump has shown some interest in a standards-based approach to higher education. Although we don't know specifics of what he might have in mind, the basic premise seems to be a continuation of the idea that institutions should have some level of financial responsibility for student outcomes on the job front and in the labor market. There are legislative proposals that would mandate that HIED institutions *themselves* pay back a percentage of students' unpaid or defaulted loans. Other similar proposals would eliminate participation in Title IV financial aid programs if student default/repayment rates reach a certain threshold. Obviously, these high-risk sanctions could have unintended consequences,

leading institutions to minimize risk by limiting admissions for high-need students who have to borrow funds to attend college. That puts the question of “access” right back into play as part of the national conversation.

- **DACA:** I have written about President Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program in this space previously, sharing the concerns we hold with many in the postsecondary community about its fate in the new administration. DACA provides legal protection to undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children and meet certain conditions, such as enrollment in higher education.

I don’t want to totally be a Negative Nancy on all this, however. I do think we may have openings to something different and innovative. In a Clinton administration, there almost certainly would have been a push around the rallying cry of “free college” for two -- or even four -- years. But that policy change by a Democratic president, while historic, might not have done much to change the basic HIED model or structure.

Now, though, we might see the feds and the regional accreditors - which the Department of Education itself accredits through an obscure unit known by its acronym, **NACIQI** -- give institutions more latitude to try new delivery approaches. We’ve already seen nascent moves toward competency-based education, short-term bootcamp programs, and “microcredentials” as alternatives to our traditional academic degree programs. They operate differently, because they have a more singular focus on tangible outcomes: jobs, salaries, promotions.

For a traditional university like ours, this new form of competition should push us toward greater innovation to maintain market share by attracting students and their parents for whom these outcomes beyond the degree are important. In the words of Adam Newton, formerly at Eduventures, written earlier this month: “[W]e are likely to see this ... incubation model -- where small, pilot programs ... allow for greater innovation at scale in the arena of accreditation reform ... Those institutions who can define their target market and target student along defined industries, geographies or career pathways will have the greatest success moving forward.”

Whatever happens ... we’re going down a new path I think. You can be sure I’ll use this venue to share my thoughts on occasion!

If you read my all-users email from a week ago or have been following the statewide media of late, you know that today -- besides being the day for Governor Rauner’s State of the State address -- is also when the Illinois Senate was slated to start taking floor votes on a whole package of bills that would provide a true budget for the remainder of FY17. While the amount that would be appropriated to the public universities by Senate Bill 6 is well less than what we would receive in a normal (half-) year, this would break the logjam and maybe get the state back on track with some sort of predictable budget cycle ... and out of the mess we’re in.

However, it does not appear that this so-called “Grand Bargain” is quite soup yet, and likely will not get called today. But neither is it dead, so we’ll see what the coming days may bring. All the public universities, of course, are working in unison to keep it moving forward.

Nonetheless, if this package of legislation can stay glued together and eventually make its way out of the Seante, it still remains difficult to divine how the House might respond. Under the Senate’s approach to this package, ALL bills must pass ... or else none passes. Thus, an issue with one of the minor legislative proposals could scotch the whole deal. And these bills have a lot of moving parts, including pension reform and gaming expansion. Both are tough sells. The House will also surely have amendments to file.

But this provides some way forward which no one else has yet accomplished, and there’s nothing else on the table at present. It’s a very tough thing to contemplate, but if you accede to the probability that FY16 has become and forever shall remain a lost year which all the universities have to eat (a sorry reality we’ll likely be forced to accept), the SIU appropriation in SB 6 -- along with our funding from Stopgap II last June -- gets us close to a normal year. I reckon we’d take it.

We have had a bit of a changing of the guard on the SIU Board of Trustees, and I want to make sure you are aware of the changes. Dr. Roger Herrin, who had served for six years, submitted his resignation earlier this month. We greatly appreciated “Doc’s” service. Then last week, Governor Rauner appointed Dr. Marsha Ryan to fill that opening on the Board.



Marsha is a longtime and passionate advocate for and contributor to SIU. She earned her medical degree from the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine, and after relocating to Carbondale, she earned a law degree from the SIU School of Law. Marsha is a surgeon, and she has had a distinguished career with Southern Illinois Healthcare, including serving on its Board of Trustees, leading the Memorial Hospital of Carbondale Breast Center, and serving as the co-director of the Memorial Hospital of Carbondale Cancer Center.

Marsha also has been a longtime teacher and mentor for law and medical students at SIU, and she was a member of the SIU Foundation Board of Directors for 20 years. Marsha has served on a variety of SIUC search committees, including for chancellor, vice chancellor and multiple deans.

She also is well known for her commitment to the community; she has served on the boards of Carbondale Community Arts, the Southern Illinois Symphony and the Varsity Center for the Arts.

Randy Dunn

Faces of SIU



Ground-breaking research takes place on a daily basis at the SIU School of Medicine in Springfield, including many projects that directly involve patients who often are seeking out new or alternative treatment options for their conditions. Some of the studies involve new drugs or devices being evaluated for possible approval in the U.S.

Among the key elements to this research is the Center for Clinical Research, which was created in 2009 and is led by Dr. Joseph C. Milbrandt. He explains the role of the center this way: "We strive to provide sustainable, efficient and cost-effective resources to support faculty-led projects in clinical research, translational research and, increasingly, population health science

research, which looks at health factors and issues across populations."

A native Californian who grew up in Southern Illinois when his father was stationed at Scott Air Force Base, Joe earned his bachelor's degree in zoology with a minor in chemistry from Eastern Illinois University. He then earned his doctorate in pharmacology from the SIU School of Medicine in 1995. He "stumbled upon" the pharmacology graduate program at SOM as he searched for potential graduate programs in molecular biology.

"After visiting the campus and meeting the faculty, I realized how strong the connection was between pharmacology and clinical medicine," he said. "Pharmacology offered the prospect of developing skills useful for diverse opportunities not found with many other programs."

From 1996 to 1998, he served a clinical pharmacology fellowship at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria. He spent the next seven years in research administration and operations at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria.

Joe returned to our School of Medicine in 2005 as a research associate professor and director of the Surgery Clinical Trials Office in the Department of Surgery. He has held other positions in the school, including serving as associate director of the Center for Clinical Research (CCR) from 2009 until his appointment as director in 2015.

The center, as Joe explains it, assists faculty "with the development, implementation, coordination and evaluation of their projects."

"As a central resource, we have been able to strengthen the school's research support capabilities, adding value to the medical school faculty's research studies and programs," he added. "I am impressed daily by my colleagues in the CCR. The center employs a team of highly trained individuals with varying backgrounds of expertise. They are dedicated, committed, and talented professionals. I am very fortunate to be a part of this team."

Our medical school's mission is to improve the health of our friends and neighbors in central and southern Illinois. Joe and his colleagues are making significant contributions to that critical work.

Other Voices in HIED

Vox: Trump's budget director pick: ["Do we really need government-funded research at all"](#)

Times Higher Education: [US Republicans Ready to Roll Back HE Regulation Under Trump](#)

Washington Post: Op Ed: [What U.S. higher education can learn from Canada: Bigger schools can be the best](#)

The New York Times: [Some Colleges Have More Students From the Top 1 Percent Than the Bottom 60. Find Yours.](#)

Science: [President Trump and science: 10 things to look for](#)
