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August 2023 State Authorization Updates & Information [1]

August 20, 2023 by erika.swain@cu.edu [2]

Hello, friends!

I hope you've had a wonderful summer so far and are ready for campuses to be filled with students again!

Like many of us in what I call "compliance-land," I've been starting each day by opening my email and higher ed news sources, bracing for potential new regulations. The ED recently released their unified agenda of federal regulatory and deregulatory actions, and… well, it was unusual. Among the hundreds of pages of proposed regulatory language and justifications, only two issues—Gainful Employment and Financial Responsibility (which ties closely with GE)—were mentioned as up for final rule release by November 1, 2023. After some digging by lobby groups, calls from well-intentioned lawyers (yes, I know, right?), and other higher ed advocacy groups, it sounds like the ED still intends to address other proposals (including those impacting state authorization, professional licensure, financial value transparency, among others) later this fall.

That said, the ED continues to face understaffing, pushback from Republican lawmakers over student loan forgiveness, managing all other student loans, and affirmative action.

In other news, it's that time of year again—the time when I get an email from a parent outside of Colorado asking about state authorization and whether it means their child qualifies for in-state tuition rates.

I only get one or two of these inquiries a year, but it's enough that I've created a quick, somewhat canned response that: (1) provides a two-sentence explanation of what state authorization is and what SARA covers, and (2) CCs the Bursar's Office (or the appropriate campus office) to address any additional tuition-related questions. It's also an opportunity for me to review the State Authorization website and see if there's any way to make it clearer (short of adding an FAQ).

In doing this, I've worked on creating a brief response—a snippet I can use when explaining to people outside of "the know" what state authorization is, how it impacts the delivery of education, etc. This has also come in handy in conversations/emails with campus leadership and faculty as well as when trying to explain to friends and family what I do!

Do you have a form email for situations like these? Who else do you have these conversations with? How do you explain state authorization in two sentences (or less)?

One last thing before we dive into students returning—don't forget to sync up with your VA folks on campus. Let them know of any changes to state licensure requirements, in case they need to update required notifications per Isakson & Roe. It's likely a small population on

campus, but a miss in that area can lead to significant issues.

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