Discussion Outline: Accreditation and Regulation
Academic Affairs Committee
October 28, 2013

I. Overall Regulatory Context
   A. The “Triad”
      i. US Department of Education (USED)
         • Title IV “Program Integrity” Regulations
           o Financial stability, proper management of taxpayer-supported funds
           o Title IV eligible institutions must be both authorized to operate in a state and accredited by an accreditor “recognized” by USED.
      ii. States
         • States confer authorization (in VA the terminology is “certification”) to operate as an institution of postsecondary education within the state.
         • State laws vary considerably. Virginia’s include, among other things, specifications regarding faculty qualifications, refund policies, grievance procedures (for students), and credit transferability.
         • Fulfill USED requirements that institutions have state authorization and that the state provides student protections oversight.
      iii. Accreditors
         • Member organizations that focus on programmatic quality, ongoing assessment and improvement.
         • Fulfill USED requirement that institutions be accredited by a “recognized” accreditor that validates credit equivalency practices.

B. Title IV funds in Virginia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal Financial Aid—Virginia Institutions 2010-2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Pell (All Institutions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>$658,155,797</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Loans (All Institutions)</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private Exempt</th>
<th>POPE Degree Granting</th>
<th>POPE/Non-POPE Vocational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,362,570,826</td>
<td>$629,320,586</td>
<td>$569,467,331</td>
<td>$131,994,858</td>
<td>$31,788,051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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II. Virginia Regulation
   A. New Degree-Granting Institutions
      • Three years to “candidacy,” six years to accreditation
      • Exemption-eligible after 10 years. **SCHEV is seeking to change this to 20 years.**
   B. SCHEV and Accreditors
      I. Similarities
         • Some overlap among specific review criteria, including faculty qualifications, refund policies, curriculum, student files....
• Compliance with state/federal laws and regulations.

ii. Differences
• Certification by SCHEV is necessary to engage in postsecondary activities. Degree-granting institutions can operate without accreditation for periods of time. There is some choice as to which accreditor an institution pursues.
• Virginia regulation has greater specificity in certain areas (e.g., refund policies) than accreditors typically do.
• Accreditors typically delve into greater depth on program quality, assessment, and continuous improvement.
• SCHEV’s on-campus reviews occur more frequently (approx. every three years as opposed to a typical ten years for accreditation site visits).
• Federal regulation imposes different specific burdens: states have a responsibility for student protections, accreditors for validating credit-equivalency.
• Accreditors are member organizations, SCHEV is an independent state agency.

iii. Reliance goes in both directions.