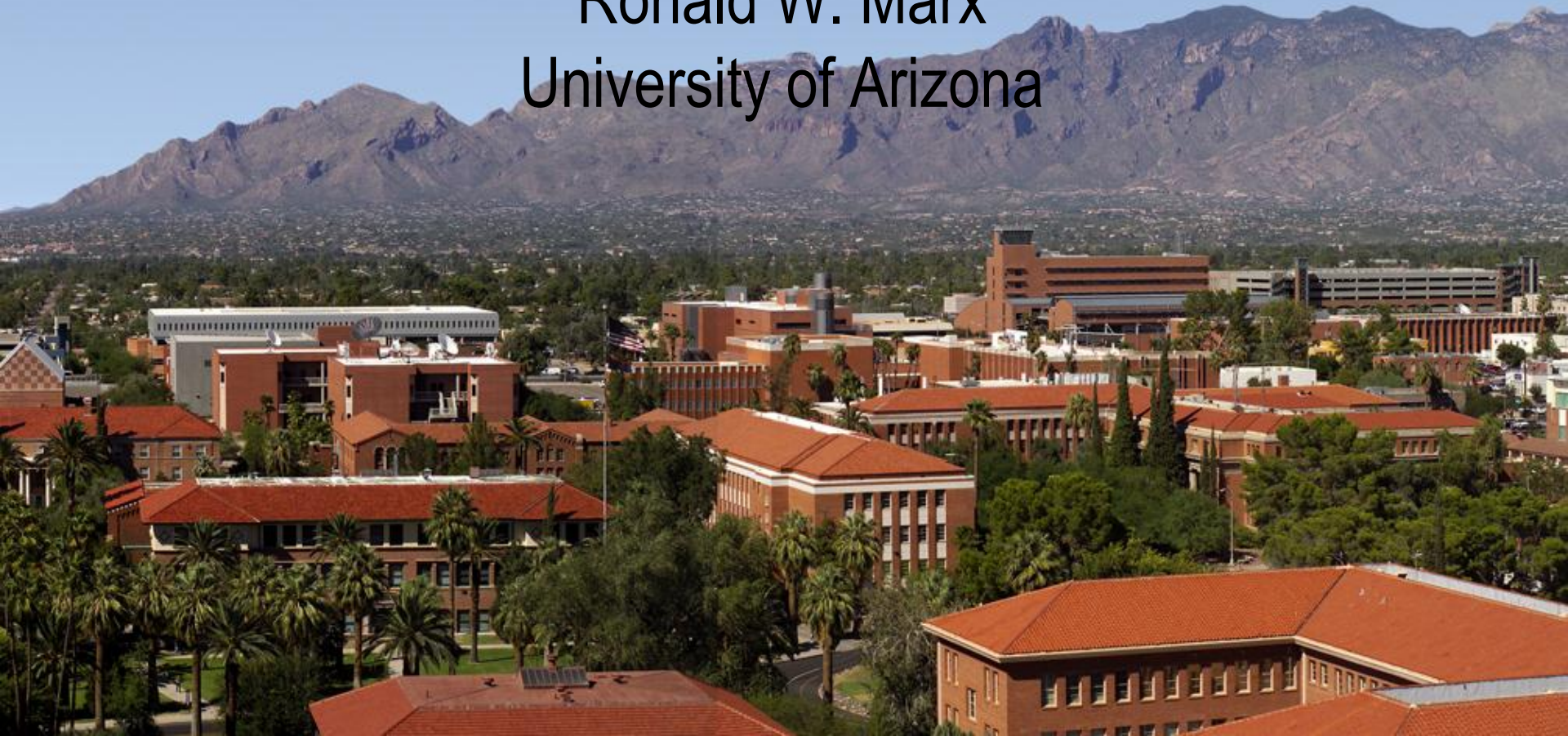


Promoting Quality: Federal Regulatory Efforts in Teacher Education and Beyond

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Overview

- National concern with teacher quality and teacher preparation
- Federal regulation of teacher education and the role of the Department of Education
- Negotiated Rule Making: Neg Reg in action
- My perspective

K-12 Teacher Quality & Teacher Preparation

- 20 years of evidence that teacher quality affects learner success
- Persistent challenges in our K-12 system
 - Public debate since Nation at Risk (1983)
- Growing public and political dissatisfaction with teachers and teacher education

Conclusion

- American K-12 education is deeply flawed
- Something has to be done and done now
- Because teachers are so important, that is the best leverage point for reform.

Federal Government & the Dept. of Education

- Statutory authority for regulating teacher education: Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008).
- Title II (Teacher Education Enhancement)
 - Institutional Report Cards
 - State Report Cards
 - In both, report programs closed, poor performing, or in danger of poor performing
- What is a “program”?
- Title IV (Student Assistance)

Federal Government & the Dept. of Education

- Title IV (Student Assistance)
- Vast majority of federal student aid is in this title
 - Pell grants, etc.
 - TEACH grants
 - \$8,000 undergrad; \$4,000 grad
 - Good students
 - High need field defined by state
 - To be enrolled in *high quality teacher education programs*
 - Who defines *high quality*?
- Title IV regulatory changes require negotiated rule making

Title II Reports

- Few programs ever are identified in the three low categories
 - At most a couple dozen a year out of about 1500 Title II institutional reports
- Secretary Duncan wants more teeth in this system
 - Change rating system, add two categories
 - Highly performing & performing
 - But-----
 - These are not in the statute
 - The statute explicitly prohibits the secretary from ranking programs
 - Title IV states: definition of high quality teacher education is the “sole responsibility of the states”

How Would It Work?

- New definitions of program quality would require at least four kinds of data
 - Customer satisfaction: program completers, employers
 - Employment data
 - Observations of professional practice
 - Value added data from students of program completers
- Allow TEACH grants only to students enrolled in programs in the highest category: *high quality*
- This kind of linkage of Title IV with other sections of Higher Education Act is unprecedented
 - Could easily lead federal government to link financial aid to quality definitions across full range fields in higher education

Negotiated Rule Making Process

- Membership
 - Members & Alternates (18 each)
 - Higher ed., including teacher ed. and student financial aid
 - Education advocacy groups, including alternative teacher ed.
 - Professional moderator hired by Department
- Meetings
 - Three rounds, 2.5 days each
 - Members pay all their own costs
 - Full members vote, but all negotiate
 - Must achieve consensus on *all items* presented for rule making

What Happened?

- Two blocks emerged
 - Teacher education and colleagues
 - Advocacy groups (“reformers”) and alternate teacher education
- All began by committing to “principles” committing to goal of consensus
 - Many believed that the Department was not fully forthcoming
 - Some felt that the Department would not back down from their goal, thus not a true negotiation
 - Value added data
 - Linking Titles II and IV
 - Limiting TEACH to only highly performing programs
 - Sequestered caucus reports until last minute, prohibiting full consideration by whole group

My Perspective

- I sought to get on this committee

- Teacher ed. needs to be better--universally better

- Weak programs need to be closed
 - I don't think the field has worked hard enough to change

- Teaching is a complex, professional field that requires

- Smart people
 - Demanding, professional education
 - Development of *expertise* through
 - Scaffolded entry to the profession
 - Long term professional development

My Perspective

- Too many children are taught be amateurs
- TFA like programs are not the answer
- They create continued turnover
- Cycles of more accountability and reduced professional autonomy
- We are caught in a distressing loss of trust in the public enterprise
 - Punitive accountability processes
 - Appeal to the market to solve all problems
- I hoped that this process would put some teeth in teacher education

My Perspective

- Changed my mind & argued against consensus
- Wrong data used for decision making
 - Remember how a “program” is defined
 - Institutional report cards do not track progress many are making in program improvement
 - I closed four programs over a three year period
 - None appears on the “closed list because they are at a grain size smaller than the reports require
- Tension between getting the right data and “burden of reporting”
 - Good data are less burdensome than poor data
 - Text fields in institutional report

What Was Really Going On?

- Department wants to close some teacher education programs
- Use the power of the purse to accomplish that
- Use the four categories that appear in all Department programs from RTTT to NCLB waivers
- They insisted consensus would include explicit linkage of Titles II and IV, using the four categories

What Was Really Going On?

- Serious data shortcomings
- Mobility—21% of all teachers work in states other than their teacher prep.
- State longitudinal data systems are not up to task
- High stakes student assessments over less than 40% of teachers
- Psychometric quality of data
 - Statute requires reliable and valid data, but institutional and state reports not required to include psychometric information

In the End....

- I was not convinced that the process would produce the improvements the secretary, and many of us, hope for.
- I did want to be part of a claim that the teacher education field agreed to all of their proposals
- Department will prepare their own regulations and vet them through the usual process of informing the community.
 - Not surex when, perhaps after the election