



# COMMISSION FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION STAFF NEWS

SAMUEL L. FERGUSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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## In this issue

[Meeting Information](#) | [Federal Rules](#) | [Educated Workers](#) | [Consumer Team](#) | [Meeting Dates](#)

### Dates to Remember

January 4  
-Commission Meeting

December 16  
-Renewals due March Meeting

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## Commission Meeting Information

January 4, 2012 beginning at 9 a.m.

### [Mission Inn Resort & Club](#)

10400 County Road 48  
Howey-In-The-Hills, FL 34737  
(800) 874-9053

[Map](#)

Visit the Commission [website](#) for the agenda and to view the webcast.

## Federal Rules Overwhelm Institutions

Has the federal government gone too far in the latest rules that they have issued for the governance of postsecondary education? That is a question raised by the article "Too Many Rules," which can be found in the September 29, 2011 issue of *Inside Higher Education*. The article focuses on the findings of a survey of 2,000 higher education officials conducted by the federal panel, The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance.

The survey asked college officials from all sectors of postsecondary education which of 15 federal regulations they would change or eliminate. "The result was akin to a primal scream. Eighty-six percent of officials found regulations under the Higher Education Act burdensome or overly burdensome. Of the 15 regulations the panel asked about a majority of respondents said 14 were "burdensome" or "very burdensome" and cited 13 whose elimination would yield significant savings for colleges."

The study asked several questions including: "...how burdensome the current regulations are; whether the rules can be changed without affecting program integrity, access or student success; whether doing so would save money; whether the overall regulation system is working; and what the focus of any reform efforts should be."

The survey results showed that the respondents consider that the regulations from the Higher Education Act "...were judged to be more burdensome than other federal regulations or those from states and nongovernmental agencies." The administrators who responded to the survey went on to say that "...the requirements [to disclose the required information] lead to an overwhelming amount of information and need to be overhauled."

The survey's participants also criticized other regulations such as: "...those governing the return of financial aid money to the government if students withdraw; the requirement that borrowers sign a separate authorization to apply student loan

money to campus health center fees or other “non-allowable charges...” The respondents were pleased that the “...regulations deemed most difficult - the rules governing whether students are eligible for two Pell Grants in one year, which 91 percent of respondents said were burdensome – was already made obsolete when the “year-round Pell” program was eliminated earlier in the year.”

The report ended on a note of skepticism when they stated “...the survey did not determine that the regulations are, in fact, burdensome...the survey revealed perceptions of burden within the higher education community...” In other words, “The rules might not actually be burdensome – you might just think they are.”

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## Demand for Educated Workers on the Rise

Did you know that by the year 2020 the demand for college-educated workers will be growing faster than the supply of high school graduates? That is the opening statement of an article, entitled “College Education: Demand Increases,” in the August 19, 2011 edition of the Florida Times-Union. This statement is just one of the findings from a study conducted by the Center for Law and Social Policy and the National Center for Higher Education Management.

The analysis is based on several factors. One is that “...the number of high school graduates of 31 states and the District of Columbia will decline between 2010 and 2020.” The result will be that “...more people aged 25 and older, rather than youths fresh out of high school, will need a college education if the U.S. economy is to thrive.” Furthermore, there will be less employment opportunities for workers who have just a high school education or who have dropped out of school.

Current employment trends reflect this disparity. The overall unemployment rate is around 9 percent while “...Workers with some college education or an associates degree have an unemployment rate of 7.5 percent, while those with a bachelors degree of higher had the lowest employment rate – 4.5 percent.”

The report further states that “Three million more adults with associate degrees and bachelors degrees will be needed to meet the workforce demand.” There is also good news for all students who pursue higher education and not just the future college grads. According to the same report, “Nearly two-thirds of the nation’s jobs will require some postsecondary training.”

The institutions that are licensed by the Commission for Independent Education are the very schools and colleges that can supply these older, educated workers. Our institutions must continue to educate the workers that will build America’s future.

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## Functions of the Consumer Team

All licensed institutions are familiar with the Commission Licensure Team, by virtue of completing the process of applying for a license and licensure renewal. Your Program Specialist is always ready to assist you with these procedures. Yet, there is another section of employees within the Commission Staff of which you need to be aware and that is the Consumer Team. The purpose of this article is to acquaint readers with the many functions performed by this section.

The Consumer Team has a diverse set of duties that revolve around matters that deal with the licensed (or unlicensed) nonpublic postsecondary educational institutions and the consumers they serve. The functions include:

- 1) Receiving, processing and resolving public and student complaints as well as other general grievances that allege violations of Commission Rule;
- 2) Receiving, processing and resolving allegations of violations of Commission Rule involving advertising;
- 3) Identifying , processing and resolving issues of non-compliance for unlicensed institutions;

- 4) Overseeing the process for institutional closures;
- 5) Matching students and institutions to facilitate the student train-outs from institutions that have closed improperly;
- 6) Collecting student records from closed institutions so that they may be scanned and electronically stored for future student record requests;
- 7) Processing disciplinary actions including issuing citations to institutions that may be in violation of applicable statutes or rules;
- 8) Preparing documents for any Probable Cause case undertaken by the Commission;
- 9) Scheduling on-site visits to each licensed institution at least every 2 years and submitting On-site Visit Reports to the Commission that outline areas of compliance and non-compliance at each institution; and
- 10) Accompanying accrediting agencies, in an observer status, during their on-site visits to licensed institutions in order to provide insight into Florida's regulatory standards.

If you have questions pertaining to these functions, please contact Talman Sisk, Bill Pedersen or Mike Santoro at 850-245-3200.

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## Commission Meeting Dates and Locations

### **January 4, 2012**

Howey-In-The-Hills

New Institution Applications Due: September 16, 2011

All Other Applications Due: October 18, 2011

### **March 28, 2012**

Howey-In-The-Hills

New Institution Applications Due: November 16, 2011

All Other Applications Due: December 16, 2011