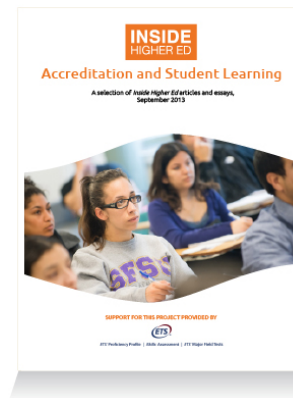


# ACCREDITATION AND STUDENT LEARNING

*An Inside Higher Ed webinar*

Wednesday, September 25, 1 p.m. EDT



ETS<sup>®</sup> Proficiency Profile | iSkills<sup>™</sup> Assessment | ETS<sup>®</sup> Major Field Tests

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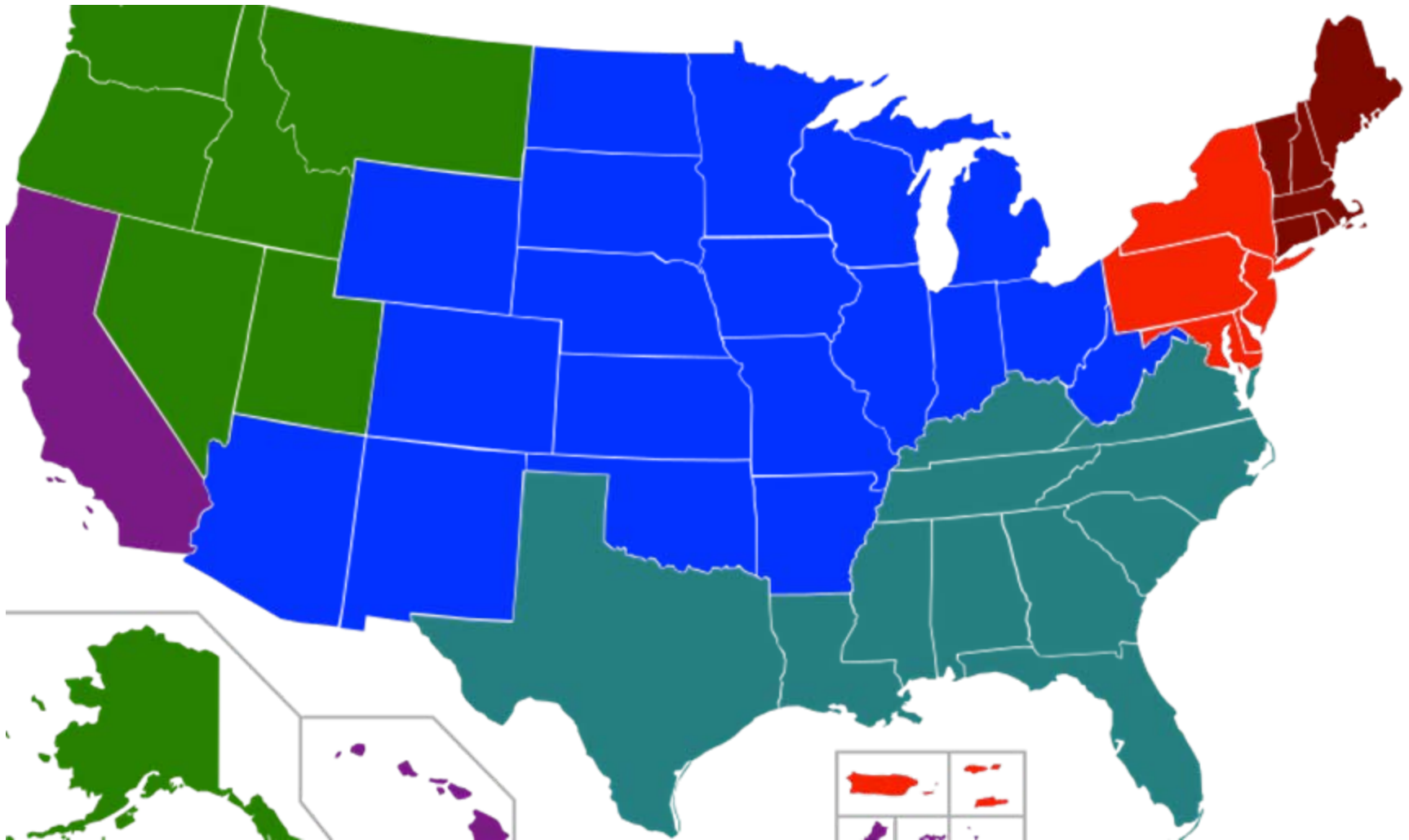
# Presenters

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# Our Focus Today

- Institutional accreditation
- Current issues/challenges
- Student learning

# Accreditation Map



# Accreditation in Theory

- The Triad
- Regional / national
- Controlled by members
- Sensitive to regional or other interests
- Collaborative

# The Catch-22 of Accreditation

- Criticized for being too tough
- Criticized for being too lenient



# Accreditation and Student Learning

- Historic criticism that accreditation was too focused on inputs (faculty size, libraries, labs, money) and not enough on student learning
- Nudges from Congress and successive administrations
- Increased emphasis on requiring colleges to show that they are measuring student learning



# How Colleges Have Responded

- The rush to test/assess
- Do the tests measure what they say?
- Meaningful change or busy work?
- Students and their incentives
- Next generation assessments
- Lots of activity beyond testing
- Activities in disciplines



# New Challenges to Accreditation

**Economic downturn and emergent technologies have created new set of pressures on accreditation:**

- **Student learning remains focus, but demands grow for proof colleges are providing “value.”**
- **Concerns about for-profit colleges drive scrutiny of whether accreditors are “reliable authority regarding the quality of education or training provided” by institutions.**
- **Education Department explores how to reshape accreditation when renewing Higher Education Act.**
- **Tension between accreditors as regulators of fraud vs. enablers of innovation.**

# White House Endorses Reform

From President Obama's plan on higher education: "The department will use its authority to issue regulatory waivers for 'experimental sites' that promote high-quality, low-cost innovations in higher education, such as making it possible for students to get financial aid based on how much they learn, rather than the amount of time they spend in class. Pilot opportunities could include enabling colleges to offer Pell Grants to high school students taking college courses, allowing federal financial aid to be used to pay test fees when students seek academic credit for prior learning, and combining traditional and competency-based courses into a single program of study. The department will also support efforts to remove state regulatory barriers to distance education."



# Two Battles

- Community College of San Francisco
- Tiffin University/Ivy Bridge

Ivy Bridge College  
OF TIFFIN UNIVERSITY



# Ideas That Might Get More Attention

- Does regional make sense in era of online education? By sector instead?
- Disconnecting link between federal aid and accreditation
- Accreditation by course or program, not institution
- Is accreditation ready for competency-based learning? And to abandon the credit hour?
- Can elite institutions bypass accreditors (as in MOOCs)?
- Can accreditation handle nontraditional collaboration between for-profit and nonprofit players?
- Key caveat: Many policy-makers have found it much easier to criticize accreditation than to change it....

# For More Information

- To download the Accreditation and Student Learning booklet:  
[http://www.insidehighered.com/download/form2.php?width=500&height=550&iframe=true=true&title=Accreditation%20and%20Student%20Learning%20booklet&file=AccreditationBooklet\\_final1.pdf](http://www.insidehighered.com/download/form2.php?width=500&height=550&iframe=true=true&title=Accreditation%20and%20Student%20Learning%20booklet&file=AccreditationBooklet_final1.pdf)
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# With Thanks ...



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