President’s report
Board of Regents meeting, 2/21/14

This Board meeting was extraordinarily short.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: Topic: Public Policy Overview
Presenter: Terry W. Hartle, Senior Vice President, American Council on Education.

Department of Education has been mandated to address cost and access to higher education. There are seven major parts to the Affordability Plan (proposal)

1. Rate colleges by “value” and “affordability”
2. Tie ratings to financial aid by FY 2018
3. Demand greater student academic performance
4. Pay Pell grant bonus to schools
5. Challenge colleges to innovate
6. Spend Money. (you know that was coming)
7. Expand “Pay as you Earn” and create an enrollment campaign.

The most controversial topic is a rating system. What is not clear at the moment is the purpose of such a system. That is to say, is it a consumer information piece or is it an accountability measure? Also, the DoE does not have accurate data (the existing data bases such as ipeds only tracks certain students and does not give a complete picture)

Other issues with the ranking idea are that comparison groups are not clear. I believe that it is recognized by all that this will certainly lead to harm to institutions.