

Question Time

Indiana's governor recently announced that Western Governors University would be a new public university in Indiana. What does the administration view as the consequence of this action in two realms?

1) First, does the governor have statutory authority to name public universities? This would seem to require legislation.

If WGU is simply being called another Indiana university by Governor Daniels, who sits on WGU's board, and has the higher education leadership throughout the state had any official reaction to this action?

Are there any public funds being used to finance the advertising campaign for WGU? Will IPFW's administration note any concerns?

2) Second, and related, while the number of programs offered by WGU is limited, it will at least on paper compete for students with IPFW Distance Learning students in some key IPFW academic programs. As Chapter 4 of the Continuing Accreditation self study demonstrates, the percentage of online credit hours rose to 10% of regular semesters and 25% of summer sessions in the 2007-2008 academic year and certainly must have increased subsequently.

What is IPFW planning to do to avoid losing credit hours to WGU? And, related to the first point, will IPFW and other higher education officials, protest that a governor is in effect steering business away from our own state universities? Should IPFW faculty, who are typically Indiana residents, taxpayers, and public employees, have any fear that their positions may be put in jeopardy by an "Indiana" university in Salt Lake City, Utah?

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