

**Testimony of Dr. Mary Ann Markey**  
**U.S. Education Department's Negotiated Regulatory Rulemaking Panel**  
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Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Mary Ann Markey, and I have been teaching for Grand Canyon University since 2010, along with several other nonprofit and for-profit institutions. While facilitating the majority of my classes online, I have noticed that some school administrations engage in practices that hinder students.

For example, Grand Canyon requires professors to work 60-70 hours a week and reside in the Phoenix, Arizona area to obtain full-time status resulting in approximately 92% of faculty being classified as "part-time" employees. I, like others in my position, need to work at other universities to make ends meet on a part-time salary which can impact the quality of instruction that students receive.

Although I'm classified as a "part-time," this semester I have been teaching four courses which requires reviewing over 700 student discussion board posts and often multiple writing assignments taking more than 40 hours of work each week. I want to give my students more individualized instruction, but the current system makes that impossible. If these schools invested more in their professors than in advisors and recruiters, it would lead to better outcomes for students.

As a professor, I'm trying to help all my students reach their professional goals, but Grand Canyon has told me that it is not a professor's job to advise students about any risks associated with pursuing a graduate-level education. As a result, many students pursue expensive degrees that fail to provide a decent return on their investment.

I teach capstone courses, which are the final courses required in a student's undergraduate degree plan. I ask my students to do a cost benefit analysis to consider whether a master's or PhD is necessary, but many of my students have already been convinced that they *must have* a more advanced or terminal degree. They are often shocked to learn the reality of the job market they're about to enter in which an advanced degree may not benefit them, and only result in greater debt.

If the university's goal is to attract and retain students at any cost, that's unethical. I want them to attend because they'll receive a quality education. I don't want my students to walk away with excessive debt and an inability to function within their chosen career. Unfortunately, the growth of online schools sometimes puts us at a disadvantage by limiting access for students to build quality relationships with professors who truly care about their future.

Someone needs to ensure that schools are investing in more long-term instructional teams and offering quality programs that are a good fit for what students need – not just allowing unlimited student loan money to go to programs that don't have real world use.

Thank you for your time.