

Email subject line: **Expert Available For Interviews Can Speak On Upcoming “Gainful Employment” U.S. Dept. of Ed. Rulemaking**

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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**NATIONALLY KNOWN POLICY EXPERT AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT/CONTEXT ON THE  
IMMINENT RELEASE OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROPOSED RULES ON  
“Gainful Employment,” Financial Responsibility, Administrative Capability, and Certification**

**The Proposed Rules Will Help Prevent Subpar Schools From Preying On Our Nation’s Students,  
Including Student Veterans, By Saddling Them With Debt for Worthless Programs**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.- (May 18, 2023)** - Barmak Nassirian, a higher education policy expert who served as a member of the negotiated rulemaking committees convened by the U.S. Department of Education in 2013 and 2022 to draft the gainful employment rule, is available to provide context and background about the Department of Education’s forthcoming proposed rule on Gainful Employment. This rule addresses whether postsecondary educational programs prepare students for gainful employment and the conditions under which institutions and programs remain eligible for student financial assistance programs under Title IV of the HEA. Nassirian can also provide background and context about the likely forthcoming proposed rules on Financial Responsibility, Administrative Capability, and Certification, which are expected to accompany the Gainful Employment rule.

Barmak Nassirian, Vice President for Higher Education Policy at [Veterans Education Success](#), a not-for-profit, nonpartisan organization whose mission is to advance higher education success for veterans, strongly supports the Gainful Employment framework.

### **BACKGROUND ON “Gainful Employment”**

The term “gainful employment” has existed in federal law for decades but wasn't defined until the Obama administration. Under the 2014 rule, a program was considered passing if its graduates' median annual loan payments were less than 20 percent of their median discretionary income or 8 percent of their median annual income. Under the rule, colleges whose graduates had too high of a debt-to-earnings ratio could be stripped of their federal financial aid funding. But that version of the gainful employment regulation was short-lived. The Trump administration repealed the rule in 2019 after delaying key parts from taking effect.

### **WHO:**

**Barmak Nassirian, a subject matter expert on higher education policy, bringing three decades of policy expertise on higher education, formerly served on the rulemaking committees in both 2013 and 2022.**

#### **WHAT BARMAK NASSIRIAN CAN SPEAK TO:**

- **Scope of Problem:** Cash-cow programs that consistently fail to produce meaningful employment outcomes due to their abysmal quality, once concentrated almost exclusively within the for-profit sector, have also gradually spread to non-degree offerings at some public and nonprofit institutions.
- **Why this rule matters:** It will help protect all students, including veterans using their GI Bill benefits, by weeding out low-performing and predatory programs at schools masquerading as legitimate colleges. The rule would also protect taxpayers by significantly reducing federal costs of student financial aid programs used to pay for worthless programs.
- **Upcoming Changes:** Nassirian can also provide background and context about the likely forthcoming proposed rules on Financial Responsibility, Administrative Capability, and Certification, which are expected to accompany the Gainful Employment rule.

#### **MORE ABOUT BARMAK NASSIRIAN**

Nassirian served as a member of the negotiated rulemaking committees convened by the U.S. Department of Education in 2013 and 2022 to draft the gainful employment rule. With more than three decades of experience in higher education, Nassirian is a nationally-known expert on multiple facets of the higher education sector, including institutional finance, academic policy, accreditation, and federal student aid. Nassirian joined Veterans Education Success in July 2021 as the Vice President for Higher Education Policy, developing and executing the organization's higher education policy priorities.

#### **MORE ABOUT VETERANS EDUCATION SUCCESS**

[Veterans Education Success](https://www.vetsedsuccess.org) is a nonpartisan organization whose mission is to advance higher education success for veterans, service members, and military families and to protect the integrity and promise of the GI Bill and other federal education programs. The organization offers free help, advice, and college and career counseling to servicemembers, veterans, and their survivors and families using federal education benefits. It helps them participate in their democracy by engaging with policymakers. Veterans Education Success also provides non-partisan policy expertise to federal and state policymakers and conducts non-partisan research on issues of concern to student veterans. Additional information is available at [www.vetsedsuccess.org](https://www.vetsedsuccess.org).

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