

President Obama's Higher Ed Plan: What Requires Congressional Approval?

President Obama's Proposal	Congressional Approval Required	Notes
<i>Pay Colleges and Students for Performance</i>		
New college ratings before 2015	No	For better data through a student unit record system, approval required
Base student aid on college value by 2018	Yes	
Engage states with a Race to the Top for higher education	Yes	
Reward colleges for results with a Pell bonus & higher accountability	Yes	
Demand student responsibility for academic performance	Yes	But can currently pilot through experimental sites that wouldn't require Congressional approval
<i>Promote Innovation and Competition</i>		
Award credits based on learning, not seat time	No	Can promote through current Direct Assessment policy, and experimental sites.
Use technology to redesign courses	No	The administration will encourage colleges to do this. Experimental sites will also help institutions pilot innovative programs.
Use technology for student services	No	See above
Recognize prior learning and promote dual enrollment	No	See above
Empower students with information	No	See above
Seed innovation and measure what works	Yes/No	For \$260 million for First in the World, yes. For \$500 million already allocated for the Department of Labor program, no.
Reduce regulatory barriers	No	The Department can use its existing authority to issue regulatory waivers for experimental sites
<i>Ensure Student Debt is Affordable</i>		
Make all borrowers eligible for Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE)	Yes	PAYE can be extended to all Direct Loan borrowers without approval, but not FFEL borrowers (unless they consolidate to Direct)
Launching an enrollment campaign for PAYE	No	

Source: New America Foundation's Education Policy Program