Legislators, before proposing accreditation-related bills, will join accreditation site visitors in fact-finding missions as participants in a site visit. Not quite the same as a Far East junket, but the coffee served is not too bad.

Higher education experts will also join such site visits. More, they will design and guide experiments involving alternate approaches to assessing quality. The methodology for these experiments will incorporate scientific standards, with hypotheses and answers.

Numbers will no longer do harm, because numbers supplied as evidence will be supported by the kind of human interaction and observation characteristic of peer review.

A member of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity will wonder aloud, “Why are we telling accreditors what to do? Why not place the onus on accrediting organizations to demonstrate they comply with regulations, and tell us how they do so.”

This will strike a responsive chord in the Department of Education (USDE) itself. “Maybe,” someone will say “government doesn’t know best. Maybe people are getting hurt because we’re forcing accreditors to require schools to gather data that turns out to be meaningless.”

A Ph.D. candidate will research the interaction between USDE and accreditation and conclude that it’s based on the need to ensure that students receiving federal student aid are attending quality schools. “Accreditors gather that information at private expense,” the scholar will write, “and share it freely with government.”

Certain elite colleges, fed up with intrusive regulations coming from Washington, will decide to withdraw from participation in Title IV even while continuing to welcome accreditation.

A wealthy foundation will be subject to a class action suit by students who participated in its well-funded, quick and easy degree initiative. The students, with largely worthless degrees will argue, “Why didn’t you warn us” and “Why didn’t you require informed consent?” A judge will agree.
Op-Eds from the CHEA Opinion Series include:

- **Higher Education and Accreditation: A Dialogue with the U.S. Secretary of Education**
  by John Bassett, president of Heritage University

- **The Future of Specialized and Professional Accreditation**
  by Joseph Vibert, executive director of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA)

- **On the Need for Leadership in the World of Accreditation**
  by John Bassett, president of Heritage University

- **Four Questions for Re-Authorization**
  by Barbara Brittingham, president of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

- **Accreditation: Transactional or Value-Added?**
  by Richard Legon, president of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB)

- **Students First: Reimagining Accreditation**
  by Rini Sampath, policy director at the National Campus Leadership Council

- **Involving Students in Accreditation**
  By Simon Boehme, director of student engagement at The Quality Assurance Commons for Higher and Postsecondary Education

- **Burdensome Accreditation System Needs Overhaul**
  By Richard Ekman, president of the Council of Independent Colleges

- **Quis custodiet Ipos custodes? (“Who Will Guard the Guards Themselves?”)**
  By Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, president emeritus and university professor at The George Washington University