



**Amazon Transcribe Audio Source**

<b>Job Name</b>	FTRS7E9
<b>Audio Duration</b>	27m 53.14s
<b>Audio Ident</b>	Speaker-separated
<b>Avg. Confidence</b>	98.61%

**Call Transcription**

WORD CONFIDENCE: >= 90% in black, >= 50% in brown, < 50% in red

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
0:00:00.47	10.3s	Doug McKenna	You're listening to For the Record, a registrar podcast. I'm Doug McKenna, and this is the registrar's office is a service office.
0:00:19.30	549.7s	Doug McKenna	Hello. <b>Welcome</b> to For the Record. I'm happy you're here. It's a privilege for me to get to communicate with you this way, and I appreciate you listening. You might have noticed that I didn't include my institution or the sponsoring organization of this podcast, not that either of those things would be difficult to determine. But for this episode, I especially want to remind everyone that the thoughts and ideas expressed here are my very own and do not represent either my institution nor the sponsoring organization of this podcast. I've been really struggling with what to say about the election and whether or how any of my feelings about what's going on in the country have a place in a podcast about being a registrar. But a few things happened that made me reconsider my reluctance. The first is this quote from Elie Wiesel, who said, Always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. And so with a platform like this available to me, I feel compelled not to remain silent. And second, I remember the saying that all politics is local. When we refer to something as political, we're really talking about the way that power is achieved and used in a country or a society. So in that sense, education is political. Pursuing an education is a political act because as Schoolhouse Rock pointed out, knowledge is power. Institutions of higher education are in the business of creating and imparting knowledge. <b>And so</b> , we are literally empowering our students and our communities. And the people in power know it. They recognize the power that education has. They know the power of books, of learning, of meeting new people and exchanging and debating ideas. That's why education is always such a target. We are going to be challenged in our mission over the next 4 years and beyond. This administration is especially determined to other as many people as possible, and our students, faculty, and staff will suffer for it. How will we respond? What positive actions will we take? Each of us has a role to play. <b>Each</b> of us can work to make the world a better place, or at least keep it from being a terrible place. And that brings me to the crux of this message. One of the great examples of servant leadership in my professional life is Doctor Harold Pace, and he taught me that the registrar's office is a service office. <b>And</b> more importantly, the registrar position itself is one of servant. Servant leadership is characterized by listening, being empathetic, putting others first, building community, and treating others with respect. What does it mean to serve? Yes, we provide administrative support and we steward academic records, and we live and breathe FERPA, but what

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			<p>does it really mean to serve? Think about a time when you went out to eat. Think about the qualities of the best <b>waitstaff</b>. They're kind, welcoming, patient, knowledgeable. They seem to anticipate your wants and needs. They're easy to get in touch with, and they are responsive to requests. A lot of that tracks for registrars with some obvious differences I acknowledge. Critically, they don't discriminate. They provide service to whoever is seated at a table in their section of the restaurant, and that is completely true for us as registrars. We provide service to all of our students, faculty, and staff, regardless of what they look like, where they're from, who they pray to, if they pray at all, who they are attracted to, how they choose to express their identity, and how they choose to dress. The best of us want what's best for them, and we want to provide what we can in meaningful ways. Each of us must recommit to this mission of service over and over, but especially now and for the coming years. When we hire individuals to work in our offices, of course, we have to recognize the needs of our teams, the needs of our students, and the needs of our community. Understanding that diversity makes us stronger and that some candidates have had to overcome many more systemic barriers just to have an equal opportunity to be considered. This current administration repealed the 1965 executive order that established equal employment opportunity. But they cannot legislate away an internalized commitment to building and nurturing diverse teams composed of people from different backgrounds. As professionals, we must commit ourselves to continue doing the right thing in our recruitment and hiring processes. To intentionally reach for diverse applicant pools, to build structures that support equitable applicant reviews, that ensure people are considered holistically, fairly and with an eye for diversity. And then after the hire, we have to nurture our teams into inclusive environments where everyone can thrive. I've recommended this book before, but if you haven't read it, please, please do. The book is What Works by Iris Bonnet. It's about behavioral design and the ways we can design systems to limit the effect implicit bias has on our actions. Implicit bias creeps into everything if we aren't careful. We desperately need to be more than careful right now. Now, I'm trying to sound calm, cool, and collected here, but believe me. It's taken a while to be able to talk about this in such a measured way. I'm really angry about what's going on. I woke up on November 6, 2024, saddened, and I think the heaviest feeling was one of disillusionment. I was disillusioned with America. I mean, how <b>did</b> How did this, I Just how? As I sat with those thoughts and feelings and <b>poured</b> over political commentary of every stripe, I started to realize that my disillusionment was a gift. I'm not exactly sure when disillusioned took on a negative connotation. If we're striving to see the world as it is, as we all should be, wouldn't we want to be rid of any illusions? This is a Latin word meaning apart, and an illusion is something that is likely to be perceived wrongly by the senses. Being disillusioned literally means being apart from perceiving things wrongly. And in that moment I realized again how privileged I have been to be able to operate under such illusions. I feel a little bit like being disillusioned is a necessary way station on the path to truly being woke. I feel like I was awake before, but I still wasn't perceiving things accurately. I was illusioned. And that realization led me back to Marcus Aurelius because why wouldn't it? Marcus Aurelius was the last of the five good emperors. He ruled from 161 AD until his death in 180 AD. He faced many, many obstacles throughout his life and he authored what many refer to as one of the most comprehensive and deeply personal reflections on stoic philosophy in his work, Meditations. I strongly recommend you pick up and thumb through a copy of that book. It is not a book that you sit down and read cover to cover. It's a work that you browse, digest, come back to again and again. Anyway, back on topic. Marcus Aurelius wrote, Objective judgment now at this moment. Unselfish action now at this very moment. Willing acceptance now at this very moment of all external events. That's all you need.</p>
0:09:31.53	323.0s	Doug McKenna	<p>Being able to perceive things as they are, not as one wants them to be, is a critical part in being able to take appropriate action. In a way, being disillusioned is fantastic. It sets me on a path of right action. In these challenging times, what does right action look like? Well, it'll be different for different people in different situations, but I think there are some general themes that I'm about to talk about and hopefully you</p>

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			<p>will find helpful or applicable. First and foremost, be safe. Your personal safety and <b>well-being</b> are important. You can't be an effective advocate orally or manager or leader if you're sidelined or unwell, and this is especially true for your mental health too. So to that end, stop doom <b>scrolling</b>. Maybe take a break from news or social media from time to time. Get off your phone and practice actual self-care. Sing, make art, meditate, practice an instrument, work on a puzzle, meet up with friends, read a book. I'm going to link a recommended reading list in the show notes. Some of the books on the list are ones that I've read. Some of the books on the list are recommendations that people have given me. Check it out, add your suggestions and recommendations. Everyone should have access to view it, and everyone should have access to leave comments. If you have suggestions, leave them as a comment in the document. You all make fun of me for telling you to drink more water and stretch your legs, but seriously, drink more water in place of other beverages. <b>Move</b> your body through space, whether as part of an exercise routine or with yoga or Pilates or dancing, or just walking around. If you're able bodied, don't take it for granted. Treat your body with kindness and care. But self-care isn't the be all and end all. Once you've cared for yourself, you need to shift your focus again externally. It's time for action. The announcement is put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others, not put on your own oxygen mask and then sit idly by while others struggle for air. So second and almost as important as the first point, check up on and support each other. Look out for the people around you, your neighbors, your friends, people you see in the grocery store, stay engaged with other people to remain grounded in their humanity and yours, and that includes your students, your faculty, your staff. In the 20 lessons for fighting tyranny, historian and Carnegie fellow Timothy Snyder writes, Make eye contact and small talk. This is not just polite. It is a way to stay in touch with your surroundings, break down unnecessary social barriers, and come to understand whom you should and should not trust. If we enter a culture of denunciation, you will want to know the psychological landscape of your daily life. Third, Bend without breaking. Give grace where you can, but don't abandon your principles. As Ani <b>DiFranco</b> observed, buildings and bridges are made to bend in the wind. To withstand the world, that's what it takes. I have a fun story about Ani <b>DiFranco</b>, but I'll save that for later. And there's another quote that goes, as the reed bends, so grows the tree. Bending without breaking is super important, but that doesn't mean you should be a doormat, and it doesn't mean to overlook obvious bad actors or bad actions. The philosopher Karl Popper, who, fun story, is the great great grandfather of the harmonica playing lead singer of the band Blues Traveler, John Popper. That is a 100% true fact that I just made up. Seriously, if you Google that, you will find that <b>it</b> is not a real thing at all. But Karl Popper was maybe the most famous of the <b>post-positivists</b>, and among a bunch of other things, he wrote about something he called the paradox of tolerance in a work titled The Open Society and Its Enemies published in 1945. In summary, the paradox of tolerance says that a tolerant society must remain vigilant to intolerance. If the tolerant society tolerates intolerance, intolerance will eventually take over and eliminate the tolerant through authoritarian means. So paradoxically, to remain a tolerant society, the society must be intolerant of intolerance. Let me put it this way, restating a German maxim. If there's a Nazi sitting at a table, and 9 other people join the table without protest, there are 10 Nazis at that table.</p>
0:14:57.48	374.2s	Doug McKenna	<p>It's shocking that I have to say this in 2025, but Don't be a Nazi. As Indiana Jones says, Nazis, I hate those guys. It's important to remember too that this administration was elected by a very small percentage of votes. The Hill reported that the 1.5% popular vote victory is one of the smallest ever, significantly smaller than Lyndon B. Johnson's 22.6% margin of victory landslide win in 1964. This administration failed to secure a majority of the popular vote too, receiving only 49.7%. George W. Bush won 50.3% in 2004. Barack Obama won 52.9% in 2008 and 51% in 2012. For comparison, Joe Biden won 51.3% of the popular vote in 2020. So even though the current administration is using terms like landslide or blowout or super <b>mandate</b>, it's just completely not true. Rather, a vocal minority is loudly staking a claim to the heart and soul of this nation. We simply cannot let that go</p>

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			<p>unchallenged. We won't stand idly by as our rights and our freedoms are curtailed and the foundations of our country are eroded. So to that end, make a commitment to take some positive action on a regular basis. Write to your representatives in Congress. Support a charitable organization financially, sure, but also with your actual time and energy. Get involved in your community. Actively attend school board meetings. Run for elected office. Join an advocacy group. If you can't find one, start one. Get more involved with the AACRAO caucuses or join the AACRAO Collective. There is a supportive community out there waiting for you. And when the time comes, March. Peacefully exercise your First Amendment rights to expression and to congregate. Protest when you must. Be brave, be steadfast, be resilient, persist. But Doug, how does this affect being a registrar or even working at an institution of higher education? I thought you said this was going to be about the registrar being a service office. Well, None of us are experiencing this all by ourselves. Every person in your office and at your institution is going to be affected in some way by what's happening with the federal government. Some of your employees or faculty or students may cheer it and think it's the best thing ever. That'll be a different kind of challenge for you, one where you have to demonstrate the human cost of these policies, and where you make it plain to them through your service, what it means to be a part of a community. On the flip side, some may be personally affected by executive orders attacking gender identity and trying to disappear trans people. Some of your staff may be personally affected by having members of their family or friends existing under the threat of deportation, regardless of immigration status. And maybe some people are just scared or angry or depressed, and the same holds true for your students and faculty too. It's OK to feel angry or sad or upset. There are a lot of upsetting things happening right now. Feelings are neither right nor wrong. Feelings just are. And if there's anything Pixar's Inside Out taught me, it's that these emotions can coexist. You can remain joyful even when you're grieving. Get in touch with your feelings. Work on understanding what's making you feel a particular way. Use that knowledge to help drive you forward. And as Public Image Limited saying, anger is an energy. I encourage you to do the things that I just talked about as a way to retain some sense of control, a sense of balance, a sense of purpose. Again, you can't be a great boss or a great ally, or a great servant if you're falling apart. So all of those recommendations are to help you to process all of the everything that's swirling around, so that you can be a lighthouse in the storm, a calm and steady presence for your team, your office, your institution, and especially your students. So that you and your team can engage fully in the acts of service that we as professionals are uniquely qualified to provide. So that as a servant leader, you can listen, be present, be empathetic again without sacrificing your principles, and you can work to build community. Part of this administration's strategy is to throw as much at everyone all at once and then to keep throwing things. They do this to distract us or exhaust us or distractedly exhaust us. This is going to challenge us, it's going to wear us down. You personally can't respond to everything. That's why it's important to be clear about your principles and communicate those to your team, then reiterate them time and again. Repeat them so much that your work is the literal embodiment of these ideas. We support you, we appreciate you. You are welcome here. Let the way you and your office provide service, say those things with every interaction. We support you, we appreciate you. You are welcome here.</p>
0:21:14.19	52.3s	Doug McKenna	<p>There's a lot more that I could say and probably should say, but I'll close out with some quotes that I have found helpful. Albert Camus wrote, in the midst of hate, I found there was within me an invincible love. In the midst of tears, I found there was within me an invincible smile. In the midst of chaos, I found there was within me an invincible calm. I realized through it all that in the midst of winter I found there was within me an invincible summer. And that makes me happy, for it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me within me, there's something stronger, something better, pushing right back.</p>
0:22:09.53	9.3s	Doug McKenna	<p>And finally, Ram Das wrote, you can do it like it's a great weight on you, or you can do it like it's part of the dance.</p>

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
0:22:21.4	12.5s	Doug McKenna	And so friends, colleagues, gentle listeners all. I hope you will heed the wise and earwormy words of <b>Leanne</b> Womack, who said, I hope you dance.
0:22:38.22	8.3s	Doug McKenna	Thanks for listening. Please check out the show notes for the book list and a bunch of other links that may be useful to you or someone you know.
0:22:54.63	12.9s	Doug McKenna	Persist in your resistance, <b>be</b> intolerant to intolerance. Drink some more water, <b>stretch</b> your legs. I'm Doug McKenna, and this is for the record.
0:23:25.68	267.5s	Doug McKenna	OK, <b>Ani DiFranco</b> story time. So I chaperone a lot of school field trips. I like getting to spend time with my kids and around my kids, with them, around their peeps. You can learn a lot just from observing what's going on, and I always am learning new slang. I've never been called <b>son</b> more than chaperoning a middle school field trip to an amusement park. This particular trip was with high school performing arts students, about 80 of them. We were headed to New York City to see a performance of Hades Town, which was amazing. Then the following day to do a workshop with members of the cast of Hades Town. Very cool. And then attend a cello recital at Juilliard, also very, very cool. It's a great trip. We get to the theater to see Hades Town. And I don't know if you've ever seen <b>Hade's</b> Town. It's an incredible musical. Check it out if you haven't had an opportunity to come to your town, go to its town. <b>Anyway</b> , and yes, everyone, the entire theater gasped at that moment. Anyway, Persephone comes out on stage that makes her entrance in the show and is singing a song, and I am like, oh, she's a very beautiful person. But she has a very distinct <b>sort</b> of tattoo across her sternum, and I thought to myself, self, Ani DiFranco ought to be able to sue for copyright infringement for, I don't know, something because it looked very similar to Ani DiFranco's tattoo. And so she's singing and dancing, the <b>show's</b> going on and obviously you're supposed to fall deeply in love with Persephone, or maybe it's just me. Anyway, I did. <b>And</b> so throughout, it's starting to really bug me. I'm like, who is this person? <b>Because</b> , amazing. So I didn't get a playbill as we walked in with being a chaperone, you're sort of herding cats, especially with high school students in a big city. And so I was lucky to get a ticket and to get to my seat. That was, that was my goal after <b>hurting</b> all of the students to theirs. And so it wasn't until after the show I was on the bus, I was like, who was that? And I'm flipping through the play <b>it</b> was Ani <b>DiFranco</b> , actually Ani DiFranco. And I was like, oh, that makes total sense. In all of her righteous babe, not a pretty girl, prettiness. Amazing. So that's my Ani <b>DiFranco</b> story. I saw her in Hadestown and didn't even know it. Oh, and another thing I did before I knew it was <b>Ani</b> DiFranco. I made her laugh on stage, which was great, not in an inappropriate way. At the curtain call, they were doing Broadway cares and so Jordan Fisher was the lead played Orpheus, and all of the high school girls knew who Jordan Fisher was. They were like, oh, he's so dreamy. <b>He's</b> a dream boat, yada yada yada yada. Like all I heard leading up to um the performance of Hades Town was Jordan Fisher, Jordan Fisher. Great. That was another reason why I was just not even in the world of possibility that Ani DiFranco would be on stage. So Jordan Fisher is making announcements after, and if <b>you've</b> ever been to a Broadway show when they do Broadway <b>cares</b> , it's um they ask for donations. They're doing that. But one of the things was uh something that Jordan Fisher had signed, and so you could buy copies of uh Playbill that he signed or something. The woman who played Eurydice was making an announcement <b>and</b> I was like, I bet a bunch of the ladies here are jealous because I got to kiss Jordan Fisher a couple of times throughout the show. And so because my name is Doug, Suzie <b>blurred</b> out McKenna, I hollered out, not just the ladies. And then Ani DiFranco laughed and laughed and laughed on stage. So that is my fun Ani DiFranco story.