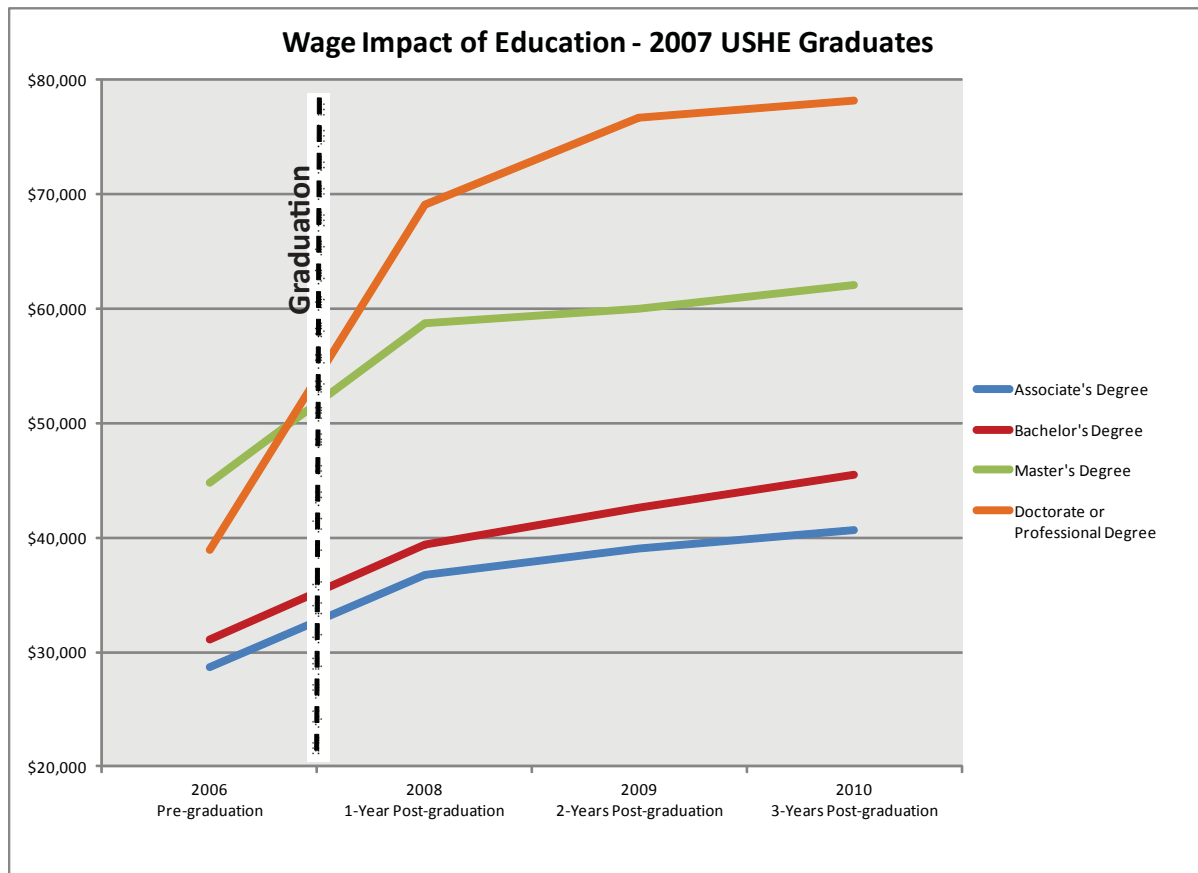


HIGHER ED MATTERS

Utah System of Higher Education, April 2012

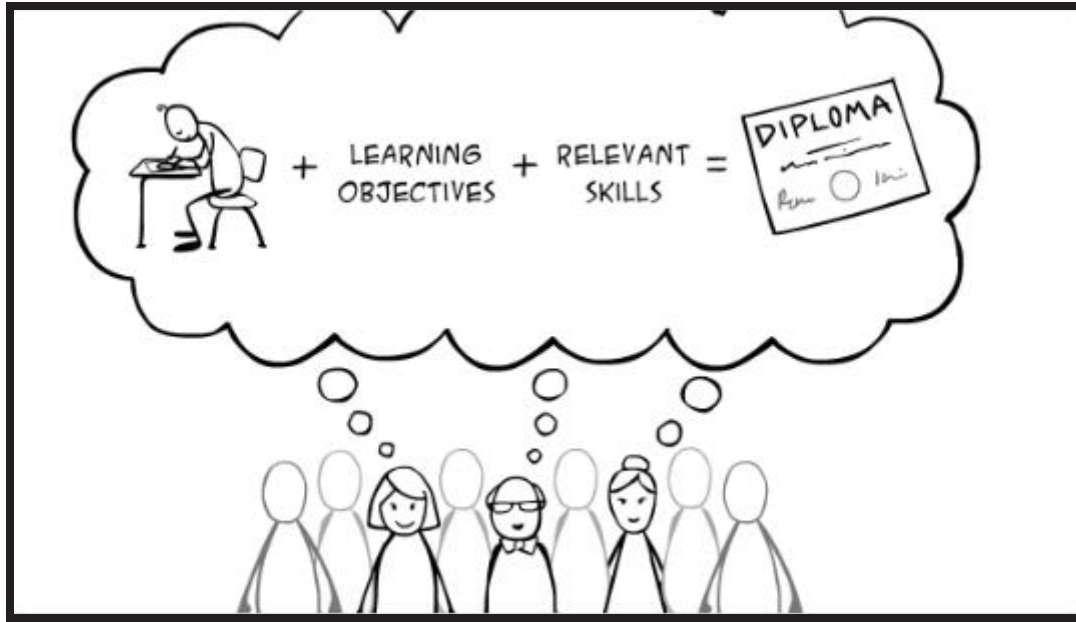
Higher education pays! And then some...

New data show significant wage impact for students who earn degrees



Preliminary data from the Utah Data Alliance show that salary increases of graduates cover not only tuition and fees they paid while earning their degrees, but received those earnings in less than two years from the time of graduation. These students started making over \$14,000 more than individuals who did not go to college right after high school, and the percentage increase in salary after three years ranged from about 40% to 100%.

Additionally, other data in this set show Utah's colleges and universities are definitely educating students who end up staying in the state, indicating that even three years after graduation, Utah students are still working in Utah. In a time we're working toward 66% of Utah's workforce with postsecondary credentials by 2020, that's some insight that we are on our way to a prosperous future by providing an educated talent force that stays in our state.



Tuning: Focus on Learning Outcomes

Tuning represents a shift from seat time to outcomes in both teaching and learning. USHE is now in the third year of this process that brings together faculty from all eight public institutions, plus Westminster, BYU and WGU to collaborate and identify essential learning outcomes and competencies expected of students. This project disciplines are physics and teaching physics, history and teaching history, general education mathematics and elementary education. In the latter two, learning outcomes and competencies aid the common core state standards adopted by the State Board of Education in K-12 mathematics and language arts.

This process is faculty-driven, where learning outcomes and competencies are identified and expectations for each discipline are defined. Faculty determine at each degree level what a student needs to understand and do to demonstrate competencies, and the process is transparent so that parents, students, policy-makers and employers know exactly what to expect of each graduate. Additionally, each

faculty member is encouraged to use their own creativity in how courses are taught and how students may demonstrate learning. This upholds their discipline's standards, but without "standardization."

The Lumina Foundation funded this project in Utah to show the nation how to better focus on learning outcomes; Tuning shifts higher education from focus on grades to competencies expected of students. Students learn from the assessment experience, demonstrate what they have learned and graduates are well prepared to enter the labor market. Ultimately, Tuning challenges traditional notions of seat time and credits and gives a blueprint of what is expected from students. Tuning changes how we prepare students for 21st century success.



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