

May 6, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: Alan E. Hall Innovation for Undergraduate Student Success Awardees for 2014-15

Issue

Thanks to the generosity and forward-thinking of Alan E. and Jeanne Hall, eight deserving projects/programs focused on increasing undergraduate student success have received monetary awards to further their efforts. This is the first year of the Alan E. Hall Innovation for Undergraduate Student Success Award program, and Regents are invited to congratulate the awardees and to thank the donors for their significant support for innovation in higher education.

Background

In its first year, the Alan E. Hall Innovation for Undergraduate Student Success Award funded awards for one project at each of the institutions in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE). This award will be given every other year to one faculty or staff member, or collaborative team, at each USHE institution, who have a clearly identified a well-conceived innovative strategy they wish to implement that leads to undergraduate student success.

The goal of the Alan E. Hall Innovation for Undergraduate Student Success Award is to reward an innovative strategy leading to student success that is likely to be highly effective and replicable and which can be launched, augmented or advanced with an investment of \$5,000. The award is meant to highlight the work of innovators to develop a culture of innovation among Utah's institutions of higher education, and to draw attention to effective innovations at USHE institutions.

The full award is \$10,000: \$5,000 direct award to each of the awardees named on the application, to be split equally (if necessary); and \$5,000 to be placed in an institutional account for the awardee/awardee team for the advancement of the innovation in the proposal.

Awardees are as follows:

University of Utah – Associate Professor Amy Bergerson, Student Success and Empowerment Initiative

The Student Success and Empowerment Initiative (SSEI) focuses on providing students with individualized, holistic support as they determine their own definition of success as a college student. The SSEI does not have an office; rather, Student Success Advocates initiate conversations with students in spaces where they already are—the library, classroom building, the Union, or riding TRAX. These interactions contribute to students' sense of belonging, which, in turn, increases their persistence in college as they are empowered to meet their academic goals in a timely fashion.

Funding would allow the program to hire eight undergraduate Student Success Ambassadors to assist with program outreach, including class and student organization presentations, basic program introductions, and social media coordination.

Utah State University – Michael Levin, PhD, Mindful Living

The Mindful Living program is a web-based self-guided intervention that overcomes mental health and wellness barriers by providing free, easy-to-access treatment in a format that can be widely disseminated. Based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), the program teaches core psychological skills that improve issues including depression, anxiety, eating concerns, addictions, self-harm, stress/burnout and positive functioning outcomes including grades, test performance, persistence, and innovation.

Funding will be used to build on the “first draft” of the Mindful Living program, creating a refined version that can be widely disseminated to improve mental health problems that limit student success.

Weber State University – Office of Admissions Student Hosting Team, Virtual Campus Tours

To better help non-native English speaking students navigate and locate important campus resources, the Weber State University Office of Admissions Student Hosting Team proposes to develop a virtual campus tour, translated into multiple foreign languages. The tour will be used as a recruitment tool and made available as a resource in the new student online orientation.

Funding will be used build and package the virtual tour for online platforms (including the Weber State website and the New Student Online Orientation).

Southern Utah University – Parker Grimes, Student Alert System (SANS)

SUU proposed an expansion of their student early alert system, called SANS, which currently allows faculty to initiate action on behalf of a student who is struggling in their class. The proposed new dimensions to be added to the system are to: 1) utilize machine learning and predictive analytics to identify students who need help, but would otherwise fall through the cracks, and 2) add the ability for students to easily initiate help for themselves.

The funds will be used to help pay for the implementation of the two new methods of identifying students who are struggling.

Snow College – Associate Professor of English/GE Director Melanie Jenkins and Director of Institutional Research Beckie Hermansen, Faculty Development

Snow's Innovation Institute is a faculty development event focused on teaching/learning best practices. Faculty participate in four days of pedagogy, technology, and assessment instruction combined with real-time application. For example, pedagogical presentations are applied to syllabi with modifications made to lectures, classroom technology, and assessment exercises linked to pedagogically-based learning outcomes. The 2014 Institute partnered 11 new faculty with existing faculty on ICC instruction. The result was a foundation of pedagogy, best practices, and integrated learning ideas for all IVC courses. This enhanced the experience of high school students participating as undergraduate students in IVC courses starting fall 2014. Funding will be applied to the 2015 Innovation Institute, focused on integrated GE instruction.

Dixie State University – Executive Director of Enrollment Management David Roos and Director of Advisement Michael Olsen, Sophomore Retention

This innovative plan will specifically target the sophomore students who are on academic warning or probation. In addition to traditional measures, students will also be required to take a non-cognitive survey to measure their motivation, self-regulation, resiliency, self-efficacy, and attitude. The results will be coupled with an action plan to address deficiencies.

Funding will be used to improve student self-awareness through the purchase of a non-cognitive risk survey tool. Two mentors will also be hired to assist at-risk students in creating an action plan to address identified challenges.

Utah Valley University – Summer Transition Team, Math and English Online Program

In July 2013, UVU piloted a four-week transition program for admitted, low-income, first-time students who tested into developmental math. Students enrolled in an online, self-paced math refresher and a credit-bearing student success course. Participants took Accuplacer before and after the four-week program to see if they could test into a higher math course, eliminating some remedial coursework. In 2014, the program added an English 0990 component, which familiarized students with navigating the processes involved in writing for university-level work. Students successfully completing the course registered for English 1010 during fall semester, again, eliminating remedial coursework.

Funding will allow UVU to increase the number of students who have the opportunity to participate in this highly successful transition program.

Salt Lake Community College – Director of Educational Initiatives Jason Pickavance and Associate Dean of the Math Department Suzanne Mozdy, Math Open Educational Resources (OER) Program

This project will work to further scale the adoption of open educational resources (OER) in the Math Department, which work to improve access and success, particularly for students with socio-economic challenges. The Math Department is in its second year of piloting OER. It is estimated that students have saved approximately \$200,000 in just the pilot phase.

The funds will be used to support faculty in their work to adopt, adapt, and build open resources for developmental, gateway, and college-level math courses.

Policy Issues

There are no policy issues related to this information item.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends the Board of Regents acknowledge the efforts of Alan E. and Jeanne Hall to support innovation for undergraduate student success and congratulate the awardees.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/EJH