

January 13, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: Credit for Completion of Peace Officer Standards and Training Academy

Issue

Earlier this year, the Commissioner's office received notice of a legislator's intent to introduce a bill that would require Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institutions that offer Criminal Justice Programs to award 18 credit hours to individuals who have completed a non-credit Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) program. This credit would apply toward the total credits required for Criminal Justice degrees.

There was concern that a "blanket" solution to award credit may not be in the best interest of students or the Criminal Justice community. Criminal Justice programs throughout the state serve various needs. They are structured differently and focus on different outcomes. There was also concern of the legislative precedence this would set where institutions would be statutorily required to award a specific amount of credit for a non-credit activity. The Office of the Commissioner worked with USHE institutions to reach agreement that would recognize POST competencies as an alternative solution to legislation.

Background

Criminal Justice programs are offered at the following USHE institutions: Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Snow College, Dixie State University, Utah Valley University, and Salt Lake Community College. In responding to the issue, USHE faculty who teach POST and Criminal Justice programs conferred with staff at the Office of the Commissioner. These faculty members mutually agreed that 18 credit hours would be a reasonable amount of credit to award for completion of POST. They also considered and agreed upon the criteria to be used to award this credit. The attached document describes the agreement. A copy of the agreement was provided to the legislator who intended to sponsor the aforementioned bill.

Policy Issues

This agreement was reached consistent with Regent Policy R470, *General Education, Common Course Numbering, Lower-Division Pre-Major Requirements, Transfer of Credits, and Credit by Examination*, and Regent Policy R473, *Standards for Granting Academic Credit for CTE Course Work Completed in Non-Credit Instructional Formats*. These policies define the role of institutions, departments, and faculty in decisions regarding academic credit.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is for information only; no action is needed.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/BKC
Attachment

POST Credit Statement of Agreement
Utah System of Higher Education
Effective January 1, 2016

Faculty who teach Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and Criminal Justice programs at USHE institutions have reviewed POST academy training provided in Utah. Based on this review it is deemed reasonable to award 18 credit hours to an individual who has completed a POST academy under the following conditions:

1. An individual has completed Special Function Officer/Basic Correction Officer and Law Enforcement modules in a POST academy that is certified in the state of Utah.
2. An individual has passed the POST certification exam required in Utah and has not had that certification revoked.
3. An individual has met with an advisor to discuss applicability of credit to program requirements, possible financial aid implications, and other factors that may impact the attainment of the student's educational goals.
4. If admission to a credit bearing program at a USHE institution occurs later than five years since the individual completed a POST academy the individual must be currently POST-certified and have current peace officer experience.

When the conditions referenced above are met, 18 credits will be awarded that will count toward the total credit hours required to earn an associate or baccalaureate degree in criminal justice. The institution may advise the student to seek a degree program other than criminal justice. Based on student needs, accreditation requirements and standards, or other compelling circumstances, fewer than 18 credits may be awarded.