

September 6, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: David L. Buhler
SUBJECT: High Impact Practices Update

Background

National research indicates that student exposure to certain “high impact practices” (sometimes called “engaged” or “experiential learning”) can be very beneficial for increasing student engagement, retention, completion, and their transition into future careers. Some research indicates that the payoff may be even greater for students from historically underrepresented groups. The Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U), for example, notes that certain high-impact teaching and learning practices “have been widely tested” and have been “shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds, especially historically underserved students.” However, nationwide, those underrepresented students have not always had “equitable access to high-impact learning.”

Quality teaching is a top priority at Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institutions and they have been implementing high impact teaching practices for years. The State Board of Regents recognizes the institutions’ commitment to quality instruction and has consequently recognized High Impact Practices as an “Innovative Discovery” initiative in the Regents’ Strategic Plan. They have asked the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education to ascertain the current state of implementation for high impact practices at the institutions and to determine a strategy for assessing the extent to which students are able to access and take advantage of the programs offered at their campuses.

Several national organizations have identified a handful of particular experiences as being High Impact Practices. These organizations include the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U), the National Association of System Heads (NASH), and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) association, among others. These joint lists include the following as especially beneficial high impact practices¹:

- First-Year Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects

¹ This list comes from George Kuh’s 2008 *High-Impact Education Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter*; the first ten practices are defined in this treatise. The eleventh practice listed here, ePortfolio, was only recently included in this list of HIPs, as documented by AAC&U in 2016.

- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects
- ePortfolios

The Commissioner's Office also appreciates the much broader definition of High Impact Practices (HIPs) as "educationally purposeful" activities, which comes from the newly formed national "High-Impact Practices in the States" group. That definition acknowledges as a high impact practice any educational effort that requires student

- reflection and metacognition;
- evidence of sustained effort over an extended period of time, culminating in a major accomplishment or product such as a report from a research project or applied learning experience (e.g. community engagement, internship, field work);
- or the vetted demonstration of one or more desired outcomes such as persistence, increased engagement, interpersonal competence, or writing proficiency.

Issue

The attached report comes from a survey sent to each institution. The Commissioner's staff have discovered that many of the practices from the AAC&U list as well as others falling under the broader HIPs in the States definition are already being implemented across USHE campuses. The Commissioner's staff also recognized there are additional practices that the Utah System of Higher Education should identify as having high impact.

The report identifies which high impact practices the institutions are already marking and tracking and establishes what is already occurring on USHE campuses at a rather large scale; it also clarifies which HIPs are already coded and thus identifiable through existing registration systems. In some instances the report shows when during a student's educational experience the HIPs are being offered.

Commissioner's Recommendation

Based on the national research on High Impact Practices and the survey of High Impact Practices at USHE institutions, the Commissioner recommends the Board of Regents ask institutions to measure student participation in HIPs with the goal that all students participate in one HIP during their first 30 credits of enrollment (not including concurrent enrollment) and one HIP within their major. The Commissioner also recommends the Board establish a HIPs steering committee with representation from the various institutions, named by CAOs, to identify, define, and share best practices with HIPs. The HIPs steering committee may also consider the possibility of convening separate working groups for certain categories of HIPs if there is a need (e.g., for writing intensive courses, first-year experiences, learning communities, etc.), and determine if it might be useful to convene USHE institutions' Faculty Development Centers, Centers for Institutional Effectiveness, etc. in statewide conversations.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/JH
Attachment

Would this be a reasonable goal: *Every student will have the opportunity to experience one HIP in the first year/first 30 credits and (for four-year institutions) a second HIP within the Major ?*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Additional Notes</u>
UU			Wasn't asked on the first survey.
USU	X		Vast majority of departments that offer HIPs say yes; those that say no only do so because they have one specific goal (e.g. capstone in major etc.)
DSU			
SUU	X		Every incoming SUU student completes SUU's structured & comprehensive FYE & Orientation programs prior to and throughout their first 30 credits. Every student completes EDGE 1010 within their first 30 credits (Common Intellectual Experience); Every SUU student completes EDGE 30X0 and EDGE 40X0 near the end of their bachelor's degree (Student Signature Work) and culminates in a structured reflection and selection of relevant artifacts of student work (ePortfolios); EDGE projects can include such things as Internships, Undergrad Research, Diversity/Global Learning, & Service Learning--additional ways students engage in HIPs.
UVU	X		Yes with modifications. Most HIPs are experienced by UVU students in their junior and senior years; to implement a consistent cornerstone HIP, UVU will need to either integrate into the first-year experience, whether this be a first-semester seminar or as a mandatory component of GE courses that will be taken by
WSU	X		A WSU team attended AAC&U's Summer Institute on HIPs and Student Success in June 2017 to develop a plan to ensure every student has at least two high-impact experiences before graduating from WSU. We think this is a reasonable goal as long as we have the flexibility to include a wide variety of HIP experiences and there is no prescription on the timing of the high-impact experience. Our goal is to weave the high-impact experience into the student experience early (within the first 30 credit hours) and often. Given the larger concurrent enrollment population at WSU, however, it might be more realistic to achieve at least one high-impact experience <i>within the first 30 credit hours post high school</i> . Furthermore, the goal is to weave high-impact experiences throughout general education courses but this will take years before high-impact experiences are pervasive throughout the majority of general education courses. The timing of when students should take GE is sometimes prescribed in academic programs/majors over the four-year college experience, which does not guarantee a student will experience a HIP in a general education course in the first 30 credit hours. Additionally, WSU does not have a mandatory first year experience program, again, making it difficult to guarantee a HIP in the first 30 credit hours. The requirement to weave a HIP into the major may be feasible but we also want to recognize that the high-impact experiences students have at WSU can be co-curricular. We are satisfied if students have a HIP experience outside of their major that is completely co-curricular or even in another academic area.
Snow			Wasn't asked on the first survey.
SLCC	X		All students on the transfer track should have a GE ePortfolio. Our hope is for all students to experience at least one other HIP before graduating