



November 20, 2020

USHE Strategic Plan Completion Priority

During its October 2020 meeting, the Utah Board of Higher Education approved four strategic priorities: Access, Completion, Affordability, and Workforce Alignment and Economic Development. Each of the Board committees will take the lead on one of those priorities. The Academic Education Committee has been asked to discuss the completion priority, which was defined as “all students who enter the Utah System of Higher Education earn a certificate or degree in a timely manner.” The Board’s completion priority should be aligned with the state’s 2030 attainment goal, which specifically mentions “timely completion” and aims for a 10% increase in the share of students completing a degree within six years.

What the committee will address:

Potential goals

- Increase timely completion of all students to X% by 2025
- Increase timely completion of underrepresented students to X% by 2025.

Actions within the Board’s control

- Defining, measuring, and incentivizing the key factors that gauge progress toward goals
- Setting policy
- Leveraging systemwide coordination

Potential strategies

- Addressing instructional quality and academic success through policies and measurements linked to important role of faculty and their instructional work. Examples:
 - Improving student access, retention, and completion by increasing the diversity of the faculty;
 - Addressing academic under-preparation through examining placement requirements, revamping remedial education, etc.
 - Measuring academic success rates such as course drop, withdrawal, and failure rates and progression rates (how well students perform in subsequent classes);
 - Measuring and rewarding faculty work; i.e., instructional workload reports; tenure and promotion policies.

- Structuring degrees for completion and building innovative academic pathways. For example:
 - Using policy to structure degrees in ways to improve completion and measuring and supporting student progress through key milestones;
 - Measuring and increasing Concurrent Enrollment participation for underrepresented groups of students;
 - Policies and systemwide coordination related to credit for prior learning; seamless transfer and articulation; stackable credentials; and innovative modes of delivery like competency-based education.

Commissioner’s Recommendation

This is a discussion item only; no action is required.

Attachments:



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

November 20, 2020

Statewide Attainment Goal

In the 2018 Legislative Session, [H.B. 300, Higher Education Modifications](#), created the Higher Education Strategic Planning Commission. To achieve their goals, the commission created a workgroup in January 2020, headed by the Office of the Commissioner, to propose a new statewide educational attainment goal informed by forecasts of the future economic and workforce needs of the state.

The workgroup, consisting of representatives from higher education institutions, industry, the Governor's Office, and other government agencies, met to discuss the lessons learned from the previous attainment goal, how to shape an attainment goal to guide institutions in the direction of Utah's changing workforce needs, and the appropriate data needed to measure progress toward the goal.

Using the input of the workgroup, USHE's Institutional Research staff identified potential measures to reflect the guidance of the workgroup. Historical data for the measures were studied, and forecasts were created to understand the potential trajectory of the measures, given static conditions in the next ten years. Forecasts were then used to identify potential stretch goals for the measures. The potential measures and goals are being shared with the commission for input. Once the measures are approved, USHE will work with its institutions to develop institution-level goals that will aggregate to the statewide goals.

The draft attainment measures and proposed ten-year goals will be presented during the Board meeting on October 30.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item only; no action is required.

Utah Board of Higher Education Strategic Plan

Our Mission

The Utah Board of Higher Education governs and supports the Utah System of Higher Education to equitably provide accessible, valuable, innovative, and affordable higher education for students to expand their economic mobility, enhance their cultural awareness, and improve their overall quality of life.

Our Vision

The Board will ensure the System provides every Utahn — in every place and every circumstance — an affordable certificate or degree at a USHE institution that will meaningfully improve their lives through economic opportunity, civic engagement, and personal fulfillment.

Our Guiding Values and Principles

The Utah Board of Higher Education is:

- **Student-Centered**
- **Equity Focused**
- **Transparent, Ethical, and Accountable:**
- **Outcome and Data-Driven**
- **Collaborative**
- **Innovative**

Strategic Priorities

Access:

All students have equitable access to higher education regardless of socio-economic background.

Potential Goals

- Increase the college-going rate of underrepresented groups by %% by 2025.

Potential Strategies

- Define underrepresented student groups and develop an accompanying measurable data structure.
- Fully implement a statewide student identifier to measure students in P-20.
- Place a college access advisor in every high school in the state.
- Adopt Keys to Success as the statewide college readiness platform.
- Develop a statewide network of K-16 alliances to support the Board's higher education access goals.
- Direct institutions to set individual goals to reduce gaps in the Concurrent Enrollment participation rate of underrepresented students.
- Partner with USBE and DWS to expand access to higher education opportunities for adult learners.
- Implement a statewide policy on corequisite remediation and alternative admission criteria.

Completion:

All students who enter the Utah System of Higher Education earn a certificate or degree in a timely manner.

Potential Goals

- Increase timely completion of all students by %% by 2025.
- Increase timely completion of underrepresented students by %% 2025.

Potential Strategies

- Define underrepresented student groups and develop an accompanying measurable data structure.
- Define a methodology for measuring timely completion.
- Direct institutions to structure programs which guide students through meaningful milestones toward timely completion.

- Establish clear transfer pathways and earned-credit options.
- Incentivize institutions to increase the completion rates of their students through performance funding or other methods.
- Revise/implement systemwide student affairs policies in the areas of student safety, academic advising, and career advising.

Affordability:

Cost of attendance should not be a barrier to accessing or completing a certificate or degree. Affordability is the ability of a Utah student to cover the cost of attendance at a USHE institution utilizing a combination of financial aid and other resources.

Potential Goals

- Develop an expanded standard of affordability by (date).
- Ensure institutional cost of attendance remains within the standard of affordability year over year.

Potential Strategies

- Revise or repeal policies that inhibit unnecessary growth in tuition and fees.
- Develop standardized financial data and definitions including cost of attendance.
- Identify and remove affordability barriers for Utah students.
- Provide equitable financial aid opportunities by prioritizing resources to need-based programs.
- Identify and implement shared services that will have the greatest impact on increasing institutional efficiency.

Workforce Alignment & Economic Impact:

Utah System of Higher Education graduates receive degrees and certificates that deliver a positive return on investment, long-term economic mobility, and enhance the quality of life for individuals and communities.

Potential Goals

- Increase completion rate of graduates in high-demand, high-wage programs by %% by 2025.
- Increase completion rate of underrepresented populations in programs aligned with high-wage, high-demand jobs by %% by 2025.
- Place %% or more graduates into high-wage, high-demand jobs by 2025.

Potential Strategies

- Review existing programs for a positive return on investment and completion rates.
- Create a systemwide framework for transcribing prior knowledge, skill, and experience acquisition.
- Eliminate unnecessary duplication of programs.
- Direct institutions to expand programs that lead to high-demand high-wage jobs.
- Refine program approval and review processes to increase alignment with workforce needs.
- Advise students to pathways that result in high-wage, high-demand jobs.
- Train and support Utah college access advisors.
- Deliver job demand and wage prospect data and guidance through Utah college access advisors and Keys to Success.
- Direct institutions to expand work-based learning into all suitable degree and certificate programs.
- Expand “some college, no degree” programming to re-engage adult learners.

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