



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TAB A

December 18, 2020

Student Affairs Committee Report

The Student Affairs Committee met on November 20, 2020. Commissioner Woolstenhulme started the meeting reviewing a charge to the committee to approve a definition for the Access strategic priority. The committee recommends the following definition:

Each student has equitable access to higher education.

The committee also discussed potential goal(s) for the Access priority and supporting data for those goals. A primary point of discussion was on the definition of *underrepresented*. Chair Church advised revisiting data to help determine the groups the Board should focus on. Board member Damron agreed to seek student feedback. The committee recommends the goal use disaggregated data for *underrepresented* and that there be latitude to establish concurrent goals that might be supportive, but not explicitly part of the metric or goal.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Laís Martinez presented the USHE Equity Lens Framework as provided in the agenda and stated she is excited we are moving the plans of understanding to action. Chair Church asked the committee for feedback. There was a lot of discussion on this. Chair Church noted there should be a report at every meeting regarding equity work. Chair Church asked the committee to think about the following terms and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting:

- Social economic
- Underserved
- Underrepresent
- Disparity
- Attainment gap
- Academically underprepared
- Operational based under-thinking

Access Advisors Update: Assistant Commissioner Melanie Heath provided an update on funding.

Nicole Batt, Director, noted she is reaching out to the new high schools where advisors will be placed. Chair Church asked if the expansion is being applied through an equity lens: when will advisors be hired, are we looking for bilingual candidates, etc.?

Mental Health: Spencer Jenkins provided an update on funding for technical colleges. He noted The JED Foundation is just starting to move into the technical college arena. Board member Glen Rivera noted each technical college has their own mental health program. Mental health is not a one plan fits all; each person is different. This will be very helpful for technical colleges to receive resources and will help students on campus instead of referring them to community resources. There was additional discussion.

Campus Safety Baseline Report: Marlon Lynch, Chief Safety Officer from the University of Utah, noted this was an extensive task, but long overdue. Overall, having taken inventory and receiving feedback has provided opportunity. Board member Damron said it has been interesting to dive into this with students as there's a need for greater cohesion and better training across campuses. This report will be given to the full Board at the December 18, 2020 Committee of the Whole.

USHE Scholarship Revisions: USHE Scholarship Manager Cassidy Stortz provided a review of proposed scholarship revisions to the New Century and Regents' Scholarship. Associate Commissioner Carrie Mayne noted that her team looked at course-taking patterns to see what type of courses, grades, etc. best predicted success in the first year of college. The new scholarship proposes incentivizing completion of advanced coursework proven to most likely lead to college success, an approach based on USHE evidence and peer-reviewed literature. An advanced course is defined as courses offered via:

- Concurrent Enrollment
- Advanced Placement
- International Baccalaureate

The proposed eligibility requirements for an award under this program, effective for 2022 high school graduates are:

- Graduate from a Utah high school
- 3.3 minimum cumulative high school GPA
- Complete one advanced mathematics course (CE, AP, or IB)
- Complete one advanced language arts course (CE, AP, or IB)
- Complete one advanced science credit (CE, AP, IB)
- Completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The committee recommended the scholarship revisions be advanced to the full Board for consideration.

Commissioner's Recommendation

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



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Academic Education Committee Report

At its November 20, 2020 meeting, the Academic Education Committee received updates on two of its priority initiatives:

- The Board Transfer Council and its work on aligning transfer pathways
- The status of the Board's compliance with the new state code on Credit for Prior Learning and the next steps for implementation, including revisions to board policy on Credit for Prior Learning

The committee also discussed the Board's strategic plan and made the following motions:

- To recommend the adoption of the equity lens framework to the full Board, with the following additional recommendations:
 - that equity means focusing not only on access but also on improving completion for all students;
 - that enrollment and completion patterns should mirror and provide parity to our state demographics;
 - to focus on equity within various types of programs and degree levels;
 - to find ways to help students explore and be successful in the pathway that will be most meaningful to them and not default them into particular programs;
 - that the Board needs to communicate the value of higher education to everyone in the state—potential students, families, government officials, etc. in all communications;
 - that data will be necessary to measure progress; and
 - that helping students who are academically underprepared will be essential.
- To recommend the definition of timely completion for the Board's strategic plan as "All students who enter the Utah System of Higher Education earn a certificate or degree in a timely manner."
- To adopt the following goals, while reserving the flexibility to revisit the definitions to include specific numbers and to define standards of measurement in the future, in order to align with the state's 2030 attainment goal:
 - Increase timely completion of all students by X% by 2025.
 - Increase timely completion of underrepresented students by X% by 2025.

Commissioner's Recommendation

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Finance and Facilities Committee Report

At its November 20, 2020 meeting, the Finance and Facilities Committee discussed institutional finances given the recent challenges relating to the coronavirus pandemic. Included in the discussion were financial information and narratives from the degree-granting and technical colleges describing the financial challenges faced, long-term impacts, and how the institution mitigated the impacts. Three institutions discussed these challenges: the University of Utah, Utah State University, and Salt Lake Community College. The committee also reviewed the annual Auxiliary Enterprise Report as part of this discussion item.

The committee discussed the Affordability strategic priority and affirmed the definition of affordability for the Board's strategic plan as:

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.

The committee further discussed potential goals for this strategic priority, including the creation of an expanded standard of affordability and ensuring that institutional cost of attendance remains within a defined standard. As part of the discussion, Laís Martinez presented on the Equity Lens Framework, and the committee discussed how the equity lens could inform the Affordability priority.

Other topics of discussion during the November meeting included:

- A presentation by the Board Audit Director on internal audits of USHE tuition and fees and a motion to create a workgroup to further review and implement the audit recommendations.
- A presentation by the USHE CIO describing the use of \$47 million from federal CARES funds to enhance USHE online learning and IT security and infrastructure.
- An update on the progress toward creating and issuing an RFP for a consultant to review and recommend shared services within USHE.

The committee also took action to recommend the elimination of [Board Policy R504, Budget Adjustments for Declining Enrollments](#), (last approved in 1995). The policy details how future appropriations may be affected in the event of several consecutive years of declining enrollments below funded targets. Staff

identified this policy as obsolete, since new student growth appropriations are no longer determined based on enrollment targets, and recommends elimination. The policy is included on the consent calendar for final Board approval to eliminate.

The committee also heard six informational reports that are available for review of the full Board:

1. [Annual Auxiliary Enterprise Operations Report](#)
2. [Annual Contracts and Grants Report](#)
3. [Annual Report on Leased Space](#)
4. [Office of the Commissioner Quarterly Budget Update](#)
5. [Moral Obligation Pledge](#)
6. [Revenue Bond Results](#)

As a concluding conversation, the committee discussed the current meeting schedule and noted the challenge of meeting every month to approve institutional items and conduct committee business. The committee proposes to meet the week of the full Board meetings instead of on the off-months in order to condense the number of meetings and have more time for discussion.

Commissioner's Recommendation

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



December 18, 2020

Technical Education Committee Report

At its November 20, 2020 meeting, the Technical Education Committee welcomed Priscilla Martinez, Chief Diversity Officer at Ogden-Weber Technical College. Priscilla will serve as an equity, diversity, and inclusion advisor to the committee.

The committee also reviewed an updated committee charter with sections for governance, programs, and workforce development, which had been approved in a previous committee meeting.

Laís Martinez, State Director for Equity & Advocacy, presented a draft of the USHE Equity Lens Framework. The committee discussed how scholarship availability, revision of tuition and fees policies, and performance funding impacts access. The committee recommended the Board adopt the framework with a request for consideration of the following feedback:

- Analyze data used to measure equitable access to provide a historical baseline and guide and inform attainable goals.
- When referencing college graduation, consider adjusting the wording to "postsecondary credential" to represent both technical college and degree-granting credentials.
- Emphasize the need for support and cooperation from partners, including the Department of Workforce Services and the Utah State Board of Education, which are essential to this effort's success.

The committee also discussed the Board's strategic plan draft and made the following motions:

- To support the Board's adoption of the strategic plan draft mission, vision, and values and principles.
- To affirm the definition of the Workforce Alignment and Economic Impact strategic priority as, "Utah System of Higher Education graduates earn degrees and certificates that deliver a positive return on investment, long-term economic mobility, and enhance the quality of life for individuals and communities."
- To affirm the draft goals for the Workforce Alignment and Economic Impact strategic priority with the following feedback to the Board:
 - Specific and measurable outcomes should align with statewide attainment goals.
 - Programs should lead to high-wage, high-demand occupations. The committee would like to include jobs deemed as having significant industry importance in cutting edge industries or as

a lead-in to high-wage, high-demand occupations. The Department of Workforce Services data should be used to justify and validate the need for a program.

- Additional goals to consider for inclusion:
 - Application of pathway agreements in student transfer to reflect time and tuition and fee savings
 - Student participation in work-based activities (internships, externships, clinicals)
 - Student job placement as an indicator of program need
 - Graduation and student job placement for underrepresented populations

The committee recommended the Board approve the creation of a task force to study and inform the Board regarding a potential strategic initiative to convert clock-hour to credit-bearing institutions. Such a decision would require accreditation and Department of Education approval with impacts to financial aid, tuition schedules, the student information system, and scheduling mechanisms, as well as requiring a clock-hour to credit-hour conversion formula. The committee recommended the following members serve on the task force:

- Kim Ziebarth, Associate Commissioner of Technical Education (Chair)
- Jessica Gilmore, Associate Commissioner for Workforce Development
- Scott Theurer, Board member
- Glen Rivera, Student Board member, Technical Education
- Jim Taggart, President, Ogden-Weber Technical College
- Jennifer Saunders, Salt Lake Community College Dean, School of Applied Technology and Technical Specialties
- Carrie Mayne, Chief Economist
- Zachary Barrus, Assistant Commissioner of Research
- Will Pierce, VP of Instruction, Southwest Technical College
- Tammy Wilkerson, VP of Instruction, Uintah Basin Technical College
- Richard Amon, Chief Financial Officer
- Russell Galt, VP of Administrative Services, Davis Technical College
- Two individuals for financial aid from clock-hour and degree-granting institutions

The committee also heard reports of in-office work from Kim Ziebarth, Jessica Gilmore, and Jared Haines.

Commissioner's Recommendations

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