



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TAB B

July 16, 2021

Academic Education Committee Report

The Academic Education Committee met on June 18, 2021 under the leadership of Committee Chair Arthur Newel.

Agenda Items

The meeting began with a review of the roles and responsibilities of the Academic Education Committee, including its committee charter. The primary responsibilities of the Committee are to:

- Ensure the quality of academic programs, from certificates to graduate degrees, through oversight of academic program approval and review; transfer and articulation; modes of instructional delivery, such as distance education and competency-based education; the coordination of academic programs with workforce development and career pathways; and attention to student outcomes, such as academic/disciplinary competencies and degree completion.
- Provide oversight for academic research;
- Manage policies related to faculty and staff at degree-granting institutions.

Action items for the meeting were related to the first committee responsibility for oversight of academic program offerings through Policy R312 *Configuration of the Utah System of Higher Education and Institutional Missions and Roles*. The Committee heard requests from Weber State University and Dixie State University to update their mission statements within the parameters of the institutional roles and Regional Universities. The Committee voted to forward both requests for approval of updated mission statements to the full board for approval.

The Committee then had a conversation with Chief Academic Officers about one of the strategic plan objectives: the role of faculty within degree-granting institutions, the strategies institutions utilize and the challenges they face when recruiting diverse faculty and staff, and actions the board could consider to support institutions in those efforts.

Recommendations

- The Committee is forwarding a revised draft of Policy R312 to the full board for consideration for approval. That revision includes the new mission statements proposed by Weber State University and Dixie State University. The Committee also voted to forward a definition of “polytechnic” to

the board for approval, as that word is used in Dixie State University's proposed mission statement.

- Committee Chair Arthur Newell asked the Chief Academic Officers and the Chief Diversity Officers to report back to the Committee in August with recommendations of the three top recommendations from each group for what they see as the most useful actions the board can take to support diverse faculty and staff across the system.
- The Committee also recommended that a focus on diversity should be broader than faculty and staff and should look at all layers of post-secondary education, including the board.
- The Committee provided feedback on the board retreat held in May 2021 and requested the Commissioner's Office provide a written summary of the take-aways from that meeting.
- A final recommendation was to hold a joint meeting at some point with the Technical Education Committee, similar to the joint meeting with the Student Affairs Committee in April.



July 16, 2021

Technical Education Committee Report

During its meeting on June 18, 2021, meeting, the Technical Education Committee discussed the following topics:

Recognition of Glen J. Rivera Student Board Member

Chair Newell read the resolution of appreciation for Glen J Rivera given to Glen J. Rivera at the Board of Trustees meeting on May 21, 2021; in his absence, it was presented to Mr. Rivera at this meeting.

Introduction of Dr. Will Pierce, Assistant Commissioner for Technical Education

Kim Ziebarth announced that Dr. Will Pierce was selected as an Assistant Commissioner of Technical Education. Dr. Pierce shared some areas of his technical education background.

Retreat Follow-Up Discussion

Melanie Heath shared some of the retreat survey results, which include more time to discuss, more retreats in the future; board members are also interested in learning more about equity, diversity, and inclusion and work more closely with K-12 partners.

Board member Osmond added that he would like to see more incremental retreats for specific agenda topics to dedicate more time to deep dive into the issues. Chair Newell appreciates the opportunity to share time to build relationships with institutions and board members instead of only during breaks.

Board member Theurer mentioned that the Commissioner's office does a great job including items in the consent agenda. He would like to see more items in the consent agenda to save time. It will provide more discussion time in other areas.

Board Workflow Review

Kim Ziebarth shared and reviewed the Board Workflow. Board Member Osmond noted that the workflow has been mentioned a few times during meetings and asked if there are any problems? Kim answered that the Office of the Commissioner is receiving input from internal and external stakeholders. Board members can help direct some inquiries with their understanding of the process.

Program Duplication Review

Kim Ziebarth explained that with the merge of technical education and the Utah Board of Higher Education, the legislature directed the Board to establish, approve, and oversee each institution, mission,

and role. With the two systems merging, an evaluation was conducted to identify the overlap of programming in each service region.

Carrie Mayne and her team compiled a list of approved certificates and CTE associate degree programs offered at each institution to analyze duplication in relation to industry needs. Presidents were asked to review the data and meet to discuss duplicated training with consideration for enrollment and outcomes to determine whether both programs are needed, or if adjustments need to be made. This work is due to the system office on July 1.

Credit Implementation Policy

In their May 2021 meeting, the Utah Board of Higher Education unanimously supported the development of a policy to support the transition of USHE technical education institutions offering instruction from clock-hours to credit-hours.

Kim Ziebarth presented the transition of clock-hours to credit-hours initiative, which included the functions of the credit implementation committee, approvals, definitions, the conversion formula, conversion nuances, course structure, and implementation.

Board member Aaron Osmond made a motion that the Technical Education Committee advance the proposed Policy R474, Clock-Hour to Credit-Hour Transition, to the Committee of the Whole for further consideration. The motion was seconded by Board member Scott Theurer and the motion passed.

Program Alignment Plan

Kim Ziebarth showed a presentation, "Program and Course Alignment Initiative." The Utah Board of Higher Education's Strategic Plan includes a strategy for the completion priority to "Structure awards to facilitate completion and transfer." The presentation included purpose, considerations, expectations, program committees, timeline, and frequently asked questions.

Board member Osmond proposed a standard of 70% or higher. Presidents Taggart, Weight, Stephens, as well as Mark Aiken, and Will Pierce shared their opinion on the threshold on course alignment.

Board member Scott Theurer made a motion that the threshold of the course alignment be raised to 70% with the ability to have exceptions be reviewed. The motion was seconded by Board member Aaron Osmond, and the motion passed.

Technical Education Committee Meeting Time

Chair Newell announced that future Technical Education Committee meetings would change to 10:00 starting on August 20, 2021.



July 16, 2021

Student Affairs Committee Report

1. Basic Needs **(Strategy: Strengthen admissions advisors'/tech college staff capacity for addressing student basic needs)**

Utah Transit Authority (UTA) gave a general presentation on how it serves students. Forty percent of riders are students, and it has connectivity from FrontRunner to campuses along Wasatch Front. UTA has a good relationships with schools, and feedback from the schools in the committee meeting were generally positive. A new connection is being built for Weber State to FrontRunner right now. UTA belongs to the Salt Lake Chamber's Compact on Racial Equity. They usually give schools a discount, so free UTA access is included, generally loaded into students' tuition. They also have Flex Routes where students can be dropped off within one mile of a stop.

2. Statewide Admissions Platform **(Strategy: Simplify institutional admissions processes)**

Representatives from institutions expressed their concerns with a common or statewide admissions platform with the following questions and concerns:

- What problem are we trying to solve?
- What evidence do we have that the admissions process is a barrier for anyone? They get plenty of admissions every year.
- Why not focus on financial aid or other aspects of admission instead of the application?
- Why focus on applications when college-going rates and completion and student success are focused on?
- The University of Utah already participates in the private, national [Common App](#).
- Institutions expressed the need for autonomy in the admissions process to meet regional needs.
- Automatic Admissions is already in place for Concurrent Enrollment, don't disrupt that process.
- Institutions need unique info to match students with scholarships so one app will harm that goal.

Board member feedback:

- Getting students to sit down and fill out an application is the real issue, College Access Advisors will assist.
- There are still barriers for many kids without resources, especially underrepresented populations.
- The anticipated Envision Utah presentation will help present data and articulate the problem we are trying to solve more clearly

- We need to elevate student voices (high school and college).
- Additional follow-up is needed

3. Mental Health Update **(Strategy: Ensure system wide institutional supports for student mental health and campus safety)**

The first year of the four-year JED Campus program has been focused on onboarding the campuses, building campus teams, administering the Healthy Minds Study to collect student data, completing the JED Campus baseline assessment, and engaging in a campus visit with JED Campus Advisors and Subject Matter Experts. While this initial stage was delayed due to COVID-19, in June 2021, USHE institutions published their short-term and longer-term 3-year strategic goals at the USHE/JED statewide convening. These strategic goals are the basis from which USHE institutions are implementing their goals over the next three years. The primary objective of JED’s comprehensive approach is to ensure an equitable resourcing of best practices and programs tailored for each institution, yet following a common framework with common outcomes that promote mental health and prevent suicide.

The next steps include a presentation by Technical Colleges and JED later in the year on progress, and a presentation from Huntsman Mental Health Institute

4. Utah College Advising Corp Update **(Strategy: Ensure high school students are meaningfully informed on scholarships, dual enrollment programming, financial aid, and higher ed pathways)**

The Program Director gave a brief update on the scaling up to 97 schools. The program utilizes a robust equity framework. The next step is to report on data-driven results on the program’s expansion.

5. Student Safety and Equity Commission Introduction **(Strategy: Ensure systemwide institutional supports for student mental health and campus safety)**

Newly established student commission appointed by Student Body Presidents to address issues related to student equity and safety. Student Board members will report updates at every Student Affairs Committee meeting

6. Adult Learner Grant Policy - R616 **(Strategy: Evaluate and prioritize state student financial aid)**

A unanimous recommendation to the Board. To be included in unified reporting of state scholarship and grant programs to the Board.

Reengagement Scholarship

7. Educational Re-engagement and High Demand Scholarships

The Utah Legislature appropriated \$15m of Utah’s state portion of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for scholarships to re-enroll students who have dropped out of a USHE institution or to award to new students into high demand programs. Below is the detail of

institutions amounts approved by Commissioner Woolstenhulme. Attached is a memo that outlines the legislative intent and conditions on the funds to ensure maximum impact.

Attachment

Memo to Financial Aid Directors: Educational Re-engagement and High Demand Scholarships



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May 21, 2021

Educational Reengagement and High Demand Scholarships

Intent Language and Overview:

The Legislature intends that the funds appropriated for Education Reengagement Scholarships be used to provide one-year tuition and fee scholarships for individuals who, because of the Coronavirus pandemic, deferred or interrupted enrollment, or who were not enrolled in the 2020-2021 school year and seek additional training and education at technical colleges and degree-granting institutions within the Utah System of Higher Education. The Legislature further intends that the Utah Board of Higher Education develop procedures to award scholarships and distribute funding. The Legislature further intends that funds appropriated by this item for the Education Reengagement Scholarship program may only be expended or distributed for purposes that comply with the legal requirements and federal guidelines under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Award Procedures

- \$15 million expected appropriation is the first of possible additional appropriations for the same purpose depending on demonstrated demand.
- Funds will be committed on a first-apply, first-approved basis.
- Funds will be awarded and fully transferred to institutions as reimbursement for actual awards as students enroll during Fall 2021.
- Only USHE institutions are eligible to apply for these funds.
- Awards may be packaged with other aid, grants and waivers.
- Awards must be the last dollar awarded after all other aid, grants and waivers.
- Award funds must be assigned to student accounts during the Fall 2021 Semester (not expended).
- Awards must go to students who graduated from a Utah high school.
- Funds must be fully expended by end of Summer Semester 2022.
- Funds may not be used for marketing purposes per the approved Intent Language.

Institutions Proposals:

An institution shall submit a proposal, **due on June 15**, that estimates:

- 1) Number of students projected to receive funds from this program
 - a. Students not previously enrolled

- b. Students who have been “out of service” – previously enrolled who are re-enrolling (threshold of previously earned credits/hours determined by institution.)
- 2) Average estimated award amount

Priority will be placed on proposals that demonstrate how an institution will support students from historically underserved populations who enroll in high market demand certificate and degree programs.

Institutions must include any other determining criteria in their proposals. For example, a student’s ability to pay for college, whether the student is first generation (e.g. expected family contribution, definition of underserved, definition of exceptional need).

The Commissioner’s Office will allocate funds based on institutional proposals, but will transfer funds to the institution only after receiving a report from the institution on the number of actual awards and associated award amounts.

End of Semester reporting

Institutions must submit the following information within three weeks after each semester:

- Total funds awarded
- Number of awards
- Average award amount
- Average EFC (if applicable)
- Number of recipients first generation
- Number of recipients prior college
- Average number of previous credits/hours earned
- Average time elapsed from when students stopped out of service
- Number of recipients ethnic minority, disaggregated (multiple, Unknown, White, Black/African American, Pacific Islander, Asian, Hispanic Origin, Indian or Alaskan Native)