



UTAH SYSTEM OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# MEMORANDUM

TAB J

May 20, 2022

## Academic Education Committee Report

The Academic Education Committee met on April 15, 2022, under the leadership of Committee Chair Arthur Newell and discussed several items including two required annual reports.

### **NASH invitation for USHE to participate in its Power of Systems collaborative**

At the Commissioner's request, the Academic Education Committee met with Nancy Zimpher of the National Association of System Heads (NASH) to discuss NASH's Power of Systems initiative and whether to forward a recommendation to the Committee of the Whole for the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) to participate. NASH is an organization comprised of 44 member systems in 31 states, including the Utah System of Higher Education. The Power of Systems Collaboration has \$5 million in funding for 2022 & 2023 and \$30 million through 2030 through organizations like the Carnegie Foundation, the Gates Foundation, Strada, etc. Ninety percent of the money NASH is raising for the collaboration will go directly to participating systems and campuses to support their work.

The Power of Systems collaboration is designed to help participating member systems address 3 goals:

- Increase credential and degree completion across the member systems. The NASH Goal is a 65-70% completion rate by 2030.
- Create a shared definition of the impact of higher education on social mobility, what it means to achieve prosperity, and measure our input of graduates moving up in social and economic measures.
- Reduce student loan debt.

The Power of Systems will address those goals through three specific collaborations:

- An institute for innovation and improvement for student success that will provide training and system and institutional team-based work around specific initiatives in five designated areas: learning (i.e. Academics and Technical Education), equity, talent (i.e., Workforce Development), systemness (i.e., defining and strengthening the role of the Board and the system), and investment (i.e., financial oversight and responsibility).
- Improving state policies.
- Jointly advocating that the federal government improve certain policies and procedures related to higher education.

NASH would like USHE to:

- Nominate leaders within the Board or Commissioner's office and at USHE institutions who can participate in one or more of the institutes for innovation and improvement trainings and strategy design meetings (USHE does already participate in two of those initiatives around Transfer and Completion and the NASH Equity Framework).
- Measure and share progress in working toward the joint goals, including sharing disaggregated data in key metrics. In response to questions from members of the committee, Dr. Zimpher explained that systems and institutions have autonomy over how they subdivide the three goals listed above and can use data we currently already have to illustrate progress in those three areas.

The committee would like to further vet this proposal before moving it to the full board. Associate Commissioner Julie Hartley will work with Dr. Zimpher to provide further information for a follow-up discussion at the next committee meeting in June.

### **Statewide Online Education Task Force Update**

Vice-Chair Aaron Osmond briefly discussed a white paper from the Statewide Online Education Task Force that was shared with the Board members and presidents in order to receive their feedback. Because the white paper is still in a draft form pending that feedback, it is not otherwise being distributed. The white paper reflects the work of the task force (comprised of two technical college presidents, two degree-granting presidents, and five members of the board) over the last three months. They have agreed that a top priority should be to design strategies targeting Utahns with some college but no degree as well as students who do not enter college right after high school. The Cicero Group is trying to research the needs of those two categories of students and formalize data sharing agreements with the institutions in order to conduct that research. After an initial meeting with the Council of Presidents to discuss a draft of the white paper, the presidents will now be working together to respond to the draft and provide specific feedback. The task force will come together and review the feedback in detail.

### **Strategic Plan Updates**

Associate Commissioner Hartley provided updates on the strategic plan priorities assigned to the committee. All of those assignments are currently on schedule.

### **Discussion: Annual Reports on Credit for Prior Learning and Credit for Military Service and Training**

Steve Hood presented the committee with the annual report on Credit for Prior Learning and Jared Haines presented corresponding information on credits earned by veterans. Awarding students credit for prior learning helps them save time and money and is an important tool for equity. Students can receive college credit when they can demonstrate college-level learning that is articulated to recognized college level courses and programs as determined by faculty. Policy R472 requires degree-granting institutions to report annually on the credits students have earned through assessments of prior learning. Note that if

students earn more college credits through concurrent enrollment while in high school, there may be a corresponding decline in number of credits earned through AP, IB, CLEP, and ACT exams. Students are averaging eight credits through PLA. In the 2020-21 academic year, 264,177 credits were awarded 33,765 students

Utah Valley University is hosting a system-wide conference to help institutions develop their Credit for Prior Learning policies and procedures on May 18.

### **Discussion on Workforce Development**

Chair Arthur Newell led a follow up discussion on the conversation with the healthcare panel at the March Board Meeting. Staff from the Commissioner's office have been working with institutions on program alignment of the nursing programs and developing pathways from LPN to ASN/BSN programs. The Commissioner's office has also been meeting regularly with the Utah Hospital Association to address clinical placements. Institutions have been responding to a Request for Proposals to receive grant support from the \$2 million of ongoing money received from the legislature for initiatives to increase capacity in key healthcare programs.

The next industry conversation will be centered on manufacturing. The following link shows degree and employment patterns of USHE graduates within the manufacturing sector:

<https://ushe.edu/data/industry-of-employment-first-year-after-award/>

See also the manufacturing report provided in the agenda of the May Board Meeting.

### **Recommendations**

This is information only; no action required.



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## Technical Education Committee Report

During its meeting on April 15, 2022, the Technical Education Committee held discussions on the following topics:

### **Program Alignment Proposals and Progress**

The Board directed the technical colleges to align programs and asked the Commissioner's office to facilitate program faculty committees from each discipline to design aligned program guides. The directives from the Board is for aligned program guides to include a single program name, length, description, and set of objectives. Each program guide should also delineate aligned courses comprising of at least 70% of the total program hours fully aligned with respect to course name, length, description, and set of objectives. It is intended that up to 30% of the total program hours be reserved for institutions to provide for region-specific education and training needs. The committee received and reviewed the first set of program guides, which included programs offered by a single institution. If additional institutions choose to offer these programs, a committee will be established to evaluate the program annually. The Commissioner's office verified that the programs meet the criteria the Board established.

The presidents and committee expressed some concern over meeting future local employer needs as well as addressing overlap among multiple institutions. There is very little overlap among the programs being discussed, but courses are being looked at on an individual basis to see if there can be alignment with those courses. Collaboration among faculty and local employers will be ongoing.

As we move forward with this initiative, the Board will receive status updates periodically. The committee reviewed a status document depicting the programs, deadlines, reviews and approvals, as well as identification of the institutions offering each program. A project timeline was reviewed as well as details of the review process.

A process was established to provide review and feedback to the program committee, quality improvement, and notify the Board of support from institutional and USHE leadership. The process includes instructional designers from the technical education institutions, instructional officers committee, and a USHE curriculum committee to evaluate the proposed guides submitted by the program committees. At each stage in the review and evaluation process, recommendations or suggestions are sent

back to the faculty groups to consider. After the proposed guides have been reviewed by these committees, they will be presented to the Technical Education Committee for review and approval.

### **Credit Transition Update**

The final group of applications to the technical college accrediting body for the transition (COE) requesting approval to transition clock-hour programs to credit was approved by the Board last month. Before submitting the applications to COE, we have asked instructional officers to review and confirm the information contained in all applications to ensure accuracy. Institutions that are ready may begin the gradual implementation process once approval is granted after July 1.

- Tooele and Bridgerland are not participating in the transition at this time. They both have accreditation reaffirmations this fall which means the institutions go into an accreditation moratorium where no changes can be made. They will be on hold until they complete their reaffirmations, and then they will begin the transition initiative.
- Uintah Basin will also hold as they have an accreditation reaffirmation scheduled in early 2023, meaning they will enter a moratorium period in fall 2022. This does not provide sufficient time for implementation.
- The Northstar team has committed to having a minimum viable product available to support credit by July 1.

The financial aid group met to discuss outstanding questions regarding the implementation of credit with consideration of Department of Education rules. We have also asked institutions to identify a credit implementation lead who will coordinate their implementation with institutional faculty and staff, reporting status, and any challenges to the system office.

A Credit Implementation Guide has been developed and shared with presidents, instructional officers, and credit implementation leaders at each institution. The guide includes information about the purpose and intent of the initiative, information from COE and the Department of Education, information about scheduling systems, tuition and fees, Northstar, reporting, programmatic accreditation bodies, and a recommendation process and schedule for implementation. Institution leaders may contribute questions that may not have been addressed. Stakeholder groups will meet regularly to review and address unanswered questions in this guide to improve the resource.

### **Tech-Moms Overview**

Trina Limpert from Tech-Moms presented to the committee. Tech-Moms is a registered 501(c)3 organization with a mission to help women transition into tech careers and to diversify the overall tech talent landscape. Their 9-week, part-time program combines technical training in basic front-end web development with a career exploration curriculum to help women choose a pathway into a tech career. Tech-Moms understands the opportunities available for women in the industry, and that successful journey into tech require much more than technical training. Financial access, childcare, networks, and community support are all key enablers Tech-Moms provides along with technical skill development.

Once the students complete the program, they continue to participate in an ongoing community that is changing the landscape of tech. Upon graduation Tech-Moms continue with additional technical training and move into entry-level tech roles. Two hundred and twenty-two women have been through the program with fourteen cohorts completed as of April 2022 with an average of twenty women per cohort.

### **Healthcare Discussion Debrief from March UBHE Meeting**

The Hospital Association and OCHE tried to identify priorities they are focusing on and working to align them. The priorities were reviewed as well as things that are happening now to reach those goals.

Industry has indicated that nurses with experience is more helpful than nurses with education and no experience. Some committee members would like to use the \$2 million to expand the technical/practical nursing programs across the state. However, many hospitals have stated that they will not place practical nurses in clinicals. The committee expressed the need to help the hospital association understand that practical nurses have a place in our hospitals and often times remain in the community after receiving their RN and BSN. OCHE is in ongoing conversation with Lieutenant Governor Greg Bell and the Utah Hospital Association, who is committed to working with hospitals on placing practical nurses and will give feedback on which hospitals are denying PN placements.

### **Manufacturing Industry Discussion**

In the upcoming Board meeting, we are preparing to focus on the manufacturing industry in regards to tech industry and healthcare. OCHE has reached out to 5-6 industry professionals to serve on a panel and are currently awaiting a response. The committee discussed what they would like to hear the panel discuss and problem areas to address. OCHE is putting together an industry education summit this fall with the intention of the summit being an annual event.

### **Recommendations**

This is information only; no action required.



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## Student Affairs Committee Report – April 15, 2022

The following is a summary of the Student Affairs Committee meeting on April 15, 2022:

### **Simplified Admissions Taskforce Proposal ([TAB A](#))**

Assistant Commissioner Kris Coles presented a proposal to convene a taskforce comprised of admissions professionals from all 16 USHE institutions to study, discuss, and recommend solutions to simplify the admissions process for incoming students. The first meeting of the taskforce took place on April 6, 2022, and they will meet monthly through June 2023. The committee will be updated on taskforce progress at each subsequent committee meeting.

#### ***Taskforce Objectives***

Recent data gathered by [Envision Utah's high school student survey](#), [Cicero Group's non-traditional students study](#), the student-led Campus Safety and Equity Advisory Council, and others have identified the need to simplify admissions across the system to remove barriers to access for students. Objectives for the taskforce include:

1. Help create and implement a cohesive, sustainable, data-driven strategy for admissions in the Utah System of Higher Education
2. Support admissions best practices to remove barriers and streamline processes for first-generation students and those who education systems have historically marginalized
3. Identify and, to the extent possible, eliminate student barriers to admissions

### **Draft: Equity Policy Review Guide ([TAB B](#))**

USHE is undertaking an internal review of all Board of Higher Education policies to see if they maintain, sustain, or intervene in existing educational disparities or produce unintended consequences. This is in conjunction with the [Equity Lens Framework](#) adopted by the Board in 2021.

Alison Adams-Perlac and Laís Martinez presented the committee with a draft of an [Equity Policy Review Guide](#). In spring 2021, the Commissioner's office joined the first cohort of the [National Association of System Heads \(NASH\)](#)'s Equity Action Collaborative and decided to conduct an equity policy review of Utah Board of Higher Education policies.

To guide that review, the Commissioner's office created an Equity Policy Review Guide in partnership with experts across the system, including:

- Board Member Shawn Newell
- Dr. Tasha Toy, Chief Diversity Officer and Assistant Vice President for Campus Diversity at Dixie State University
- Emma Houston, Special Assistant to the Vice President of EDI at the University of Utah
- Jenalee Moynier, Diversity Officer at Uintah Basin Technical College
- Dr. Clifton Sanders, Provost for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer at Salt Lake Community College

The Commissioner's office will convene an internal group to begin reviewing Board policies for equity considerations, utilizing the guide. Any recommended policy changes will go to Board committees for review and approval. The Commissioner's office anticipates hosting a roundtable with institutions in fall 2022 to share best practices around equity policy reviews and facilitate a discussion with practitioners from other state systems.

### **Institutional FAFSA Completion Efforts (TAB C)**

Brett Perozzi, Vice President of Student Affairs at Weber State University, and Monica Schwenk, Vice President of Student Services at Ogden-Weber Technical College, shared their institutions' successes in increasing FAFSA completion for their students. The committee also discussed [highlights from the Commissioner's office efforts around FAFSA completion](#).

#### ***Weber State University***

- Targeted texting for all students to help them complete the process; texting all students as well as continuing students who are either appealing or who haven't accepted awards yet
- Online workshops, Student FAFSA Advocates (most are bilingual), and Money Management Center expanding FAFSA nights to specific underrepresented populations
- Hearing great reports on UCAC advisers in their region supporting FAFSA completion

#### ***Ogden-Weber Technical College***

- Saw a 24% increase in FAFSA submissions and a 5% increase in FAFSA awards
- Shared financial aid instructions and information to all Ogden-Weber Technical College employees
- Participated in their local school districts' college awareness and application programs
- Used HEERF funding and Reengagement Scholarships to inform and support participation

### **Title IX Coordination and Collaboration (TAB D)**

Alison Adams-Perlac, Associate General Counsel, provided an update on systemwide Title IX coordination:



- The University of Utah and Brigham Young University have agreed to partner with USHE to create ongoing externship programs for law students to complete internships in Title IX Offices across the state, starting fall 2022. The externship positions will help support the investigation, process advising, and decision-making roles in Title IX Offices, as well as ensure that job openings in these offices are advertised to students whose professional interests align with this work.
- USHE is exploring ideas related to institutions partnering with each other for increased training and investigation support, as well as internal and external training options.
- USHE is also planning a summer training specifically targeted at USHE's technical college Title IX coordinators but available to all Title IX coordinators in the system.

### **Campus Safety and Equity Advisory Council (CSEAC) (TAB E)**

Board member Tanner Marcum and CSEAC member Christopher Westwood (SUU) reviewed student feedback from the March 18, 2022 CSEAC meeting, which included [a discussion on student mental health and campus resources](#). Council members were asked to review their institution's mental health plans (if applicable) and come prepared to discuss their institution's mental health service offerings, their perception of the communication and promotion of those services, campus mental health services processes and procedures, and various other questions.

### **2022 Legislative Outcomes: Statewide Mental Health Services and State Financial Aid Revisions (TAB F)**

Associate Commissioner for Government Relations Spencer Jenkins presented on two successes during the legislative session that impact the strategic goals of the Student Affairs Committee: the \$3 million appropriation for student mental health and revisions to state financial aid programs.

#### ***Statewide Mental Health Services***

In August 2021, the Student Affairs Committee [recommended two initiatives](#), after-hours crisis response and systemwide peer supports, to the Board to include in its funding priorities for the 2022 Legislative Session. The Legislature fully funded this \$3 million appropriations request to the Commissioner's office. Both initiatives support an expanded spectrum of mental health for postsecondary students that focuses on alleviating the triage-like caseloads currently inundating on-campus mental health counseling services.

#### ***State Financial Aid Revisions***

The Commissioner's office successfully pursued legislation ([HB 355, Higher Education Financial Aid Amendments](#)) to streamline many state aid programs administered by the Utah Board of Higher Education. The objectives of these changes are to increase equitably available awards to students from historically underserved populations and enable reporting consistency and accountability.

## **Highlights from the Board's Equity Resolutions (TAB F)**

Assistant Commissioner for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Laís Martinez [presented highlights from the Board's equity resolutions](#). All resolutions come with action items and charges for the Commissioner's office and USHE institutions, in line with the [Equity Lens Framework](#) and the [Board's strategic plan](#). Actionable progress reported includes:

### ***March 2021: Resolution to Recognize the Positive Impact of Dreamers within USHE***

- Board adopts strategic plan including HB 144 affidavit streamlining
- Utah Dreamers Coalition is reconvened in July 2021
- Next steps: remove barriers to participation in Concurrent Enrollment for undocumented students, standardize HB 144, work to support the inclusion of undocumented students in scholarships

### ***May 2021: [Resolution to Support and Celebrate Juneteenth within USHE](#)***

- Recognition of Juneteenth as a USHE holiday
- Publishing annual Juneteenth report
- Supporting Expect the Great program

### ***March 2022: [Resolution to Affirm and Support USHE's LGBT Community](#)***

- Next steps: Develop USHE LGBTQ+ best practices guide, to be shared with committee in October 2022