



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

November 2022

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Higher Education and Corrections Council 2022 Annual Report

The Higher Education and Corrections Council was created by [House Bill 226 \(2022\)](#), with Representative V. Lowry Snow as the sponsor and Senator Derrin R. Owens as floor sponsor, “to advise the [Board of Higher Education], the Education Interim Committee, and the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee regarding the development and delivery of accredited higher education curriculum to incarcerated individuals in the state correctional system.”¹ The council’s statutory charge is to coordinate, facilitate, and support education to prepare for integration and productive employment upon release.² They are to explore and provide recommendations to the Utah Board of Higher Education and the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) for the delivery of higher education, collection and analysis of data, and requests for legislative appropriations.

A roster of council members, appointed as outlined in [UCA 53B-35-201](#), is provided in Appendix A. The council is co-chaired by Senator Owens and Representative Snow and staffed by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The council held its first meeting on July 27, 2022, and met in August, October, and November. This annual report of the council’s programs, plans, and recommendations for higher education in corrections facilities is provided in accordance with [UCA 53B-35-202\(2\)](#).

Higher Education Programs in Correctional Facilities

Accredited, state-funded higher education curriculum is currently provided to UDC inmates by four Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institutions. Enrollment and completion reports for each institution are provided in Appendix B.

Technical Education Certificate Programs

(Contracted by UDC; funded by Prison Telephone Surcharge Account, student tuition, and UDC programming budget)

- Davis Technical College (at Salt Lake Correctional Facility, Salt Lake City, Utah)
- Snow College (at Central Utah Correctional Facility, Gunnison, Utah)

¹ Utah Code [UCA 53B-35-201\(1\)](#)

² Utah Code [UCA 53B-35-202\(1\)](#)

- Uintah Basin Technical College (at Duchesne County Jail, Duchesne, Utah)

Academic Education

(Funded by appropriation to SLCC E&G budget and by student tuition)

- Salt Lake Community College (at Salt Lake Correctional Facility, Salt Lake City, Utah)

The University of Utah Prison Education Program also offers credit-bearing courses through the University of Utah and with partnering institutions.

Higher Education and Corrections Council Plans

During start-up, the council's work has been to identify issues and priorities needing attention. Work has focused on evidence-based practices, data, educational programming, funding, access to and continuity of education, instructional technology, workforce alignment, and industry engagement. Initial recommendations are provided in the following section.

In 2023, the council will continue exploring evidence-based practices and its evaluation of Utah's approaches to develop further recommendations. The emphasis will be on identifying what the state *ought* to be doing and strategic priorities to address gaps within higher education for incarcerated individuals. The council will consider results and data from the initial 2022 recommendations to inform priorities.

Recommendations to the Board of Higher Education and Department of Corrections

1. **Governor Statement**—A best practice found in states with successful prison education initiatives has been to launch with a strong message from state leadership. The council recommends that the Board of Higher Education consider engaging Governor Cox to issue a statement that commits Utah and its institutions to support postsecondary education in the prison system as a prelude to collaboration with policymakers and the state legislature. The statement should include an emphasis on technical education and pathways to employment and bachelor's degrees.
2. **Education Housing Units**—Student education in correctional facilities is frequently interrupted by disturbances such as inmate relocations, lockdowns, and an environment or culture not conducive to study and progress. The council recommends that the Department of Corrections house students together in residential units in an environment conducive to education with proximity and access to education facilities, faculty, and advisors.

3. **Maintain and Fund Current Programming**—State funding currently supports technical education certificate programs provided in correctional facilities by Davis Technical College, Snow College, and Uintah Basin Technical College, as well as academic education provided by Salt Lake Community College. While the council will be continuing further study of other programs that might be recommended, it recommends that the Board of Higher Education and the Utah Department of Corrections maintain the current programming and that UDC secure additional one-time funding shown in Appendix C to support current programming.
4. **Fund and Provide Access to Technology and Support**—Effective education, whether at a college campus or prison, requires access to educational resources, support, and technology.
 - a. **Tablets and Keyboards**—The Department of Corrections recently utilized Covid funds to secure tablets that serve as platforms for education and other uses. The council recommends that UDC:
 - Prioritize using existing tablets for individuals participating in educational programs.
 - Obtain funding for additional tablets and keyboards from UDC resources, private sector resources, foundations, grants, and requests for legislative appropriation to support education and other inmate uses.
 - b. **Educational Support**—The council recommends that UDC provide access to educational tools and technology, advisors, labs, and other resources as consistent as possible with what is required and provided for students at the institution’s campus and secure ongoing funds to support what is needed to access them.
5. **Reduce Interruptions (HB194)**—House Bill 194 (2022) established provisions for UDC to consider when making decisions affecting a student inmate’s access to and continuation of education ([UCA 64-13-48](#) – subsections 4 and 6e). The council recommends that UDC develop and utilize tools and processes to intentionally consider the provisions with regard to every student and to follow up and report as set forth in the statute.
6. **Student Success Advisors**—With numerous challenges in accessing, navigating, and successfully completing an effective higher education program, particularly in a corrections environment, students need guidance, support, and advocacy from experts in the education system. The council recommends that the Board of Higher Education support legislation to fund and provide a higher education student advisor employed by USHE or institutions at each facility, with primary responsibility in collaboration with the Department of Corrections for recruiting, enrolling, and supporting incarcerated students in their programs.

Issues for Coordination or Further Study by the Council

The Higher Education and Corrections Council has identified the following as issues that they will study further and consider for recommendations during 2023.

1. **Educational Programs**

- a. **Credentials**—Evaluate evidence-based research and outcomes of current programs to determine the effectiveness of and recommendations for state investment in a new or expanded certificate, associate degree, and bachelor’s degree programs.
 - b. **Occupations**—Consider occupations to be recommended for educational programming.
 - c. **Roles and Missions**—Consider institutional roles and missions in providing recommendations for programming.
2. **Funding Model**—Consider recommendations to continue or change the current funding models.
- a. **UDC Contract**—Technical education is currently funded by the Department of Corrections under contracts with institutions.
 - b. **Institution Appropriation**—Salt Lake Community College is funded to provide general education by direct appropriation to its Education and General budget.
 - c. **Student Costs**—Student tuition, fees, and other expenses are covered by personal funds or promissory notes.
 - d. **Pell**—Second Chance Pell will be available starting July 2023 for incarcerated students, with requirements for institution and student eligibility that will need to be addressed.
 - e. **Prison Telephone Surcharge Account**—Revenue from inmate phone calls largely funds the current technical education.
 - f. **Private Sector**—Consider private sector resources that might assist with technology and programming.
3. **Pathways**—Assign a workgroup to identify and make educational pathways accessible and achievable for incarcerated students, including the adaptation of USHE articulation maps.
4. **Data**—Make recommendations to organize and implement a standardized collection of program data from all current participating institutions and UDC. Consider tracking and data for the impact of higher education on employment, parole completion, and reentry outcomes of current and recommended programs.
5. **Prison Education Evaluation**—Consider recommendations regarding third-party evaluation and criteria for the Federal Prison Education Program and Pell eligibility for the Department of Corrections.
6. **County Jail Facilities**—Consider recommendations to provide education to state inmates located at county jails.

7. **Access and Continuity**—Address infrastructure needs and access to education technology, support services, and materials. Consider recommendations to ensure continued student access to educational programs for completion.

8. **Employers**—Consider ways to provide access to and engagement of employers.

Appendix A

Higher Education and Corrections Council

November 9, 2022

Council Members ([UCA 53B-35-201\(2\)](#))

(a) House of Representatives, Co-Chair (appointed by Speaker)

- Representative Lowry Snow
- (Representative Melissa Ballard – ex-officio participant)

(b) Senate, Co-Chair (appointed by President)

- Senator Derrin Owens

(c) Members of the Utah Board of Higher Education (two) with technical education expertise and general education expertise (appointed by the Board Chair)

- Rich Christiansen
- Grace Acosta

(d) Commissioner of Higher Education or Designee

- Jared Haines (designee), Senior Advisor to the Commissioner

(e) Institution Employees (two) engaged in prison education, with transfer articulation expertise (appointed by USHE Commissioner)

(i) **Technical College**

- Dan Powers, Davis Technical College, Director of Rehabilitative Programs

(ii) **Degree-Granting Institution**

- David Bokovoy, Salt Lake Community College, Prison Education Director

(f) Governor appointments

(i) **Researcher** who actively researches higher education delivered in a corrections setting using evidence-based practices

- Christopher Hodson, Associate Professor of History, Brigham Young University

(ii) **Former Student** who participated in postsecondary educational programs while incarcerated:

- Roxanna Molina, Davis Technical College Graduate

(g) Member of Board of Pardons and Parole (appointed by BPP Chair)

- Carrie Cochran, Chair, Board of Pardons and Parole

(h) Department of Corrections Executive Director or Designee

- Anndrea Parrish (designee), Institutional Programming Director

(i) Department of Corrections Employee with education expertise (appointed by Executive Director)

- Brian Fauver, Education Specialist

(j) Department of Workforce Services Executive Director or Designee

- Helen Hanson (designee), Economic Service Area Director, Northern Utah

Appendix B

Higher Education in Utah Correctional Facilities

Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2022

Davis Technical College – Salt Lake Correctional Facility

Program	Credential	Enrollments	Distinct Headcount	FTE (Mem hrs/900)	Graduates
Automotive Technology	Certificate	19	19	6	3
Business Administrative Services	Certificate	73	73	24	30
CNC Machining	Certificate	12	12	4	1
Culinary Arts	Certificate	80	80	35	34
Welding Technology	Certificate	36	36	12	3
FY2022 Total		220	200	81	71
FY2021 Total		154	146	44	32
FY2020 Total		353	314	85	58
FY2019 Total		393	348	117	65
FY2018 Total		448	404	130	75

Source: Davis Technical College

Snow College – Central Utah Correctional Facility

Program	Credential	Enrollments	Distinct Headcount	Graduates
Culinary Arts	Certificate	46	20	22
Construction Management	Certificate	40	20	22
FY2022 Total		86	40	44
FY2021 Total		96	0	65
FY2020 Total		60	0	45
FY2019 Total		111	0	95
FY2018 Total		106	0	85

Source: Snow College

Uintah Basin Technical College – Duchesne County Jail

Program	Credential	Enrollments	Distinct Headcount	FTE (Mem hrs/900)	Graduates
Residential Construction	Certificate	39	38	12	30
FY2022 Total		39	38	12	30
FY2021 Total		38	38	10	27
FY2020 Total		40	40	7	18
FY2019 Total		28	28	5	17
FY2018 Total		24	24	8	20

Source: Uintah Basin Technical College

Salt Lake Community College – Salt Lake Correctional Facility

Program	Credential	Enrollments	Distinct Headcount	FTE (Mem hrs/900)	Graduates
General Education	Associate's of Science	233	154	5	14
FY2022 Total		233	154	5	14
FY2021 Total		210	62	NA	1
FY2020 Total		226	66	NA	4
FY2019 Total		537	110	NA	1
FY2018 Total		351	80	NA	0
<i>Source: Salt Lake Community College</i>					

Appendix C

Funding Needs – Current Programs

The following have been identified as additional funding needed in FY2024 for the continued support of current higher education programs in correctional facilities.

Utah Department of Corrections (Prison Telephone Surcharge Account, UDC budget, or UDC legislative request)

1. \$30,000 (one-time) to Davis Technical College for technology upgrade at Salt Lake Correctional Facility: upgrading computers, updating software, and bringing technology into classrooms.
2. \$20,000 (one-time) to Davis Technical College to replace existing automobiles in the Automotive Technology program at Salt Lake Correctional Facility.