



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

May 18, 2023

Update to Section 7 of Policy R401, *Approval of New Programs, Program Changes, Discontinued Programs, and Program Reports*

In accordance with [Utah Code § 53B-16-101](#), the Utah Board of Higher Education is responsible for prescribing the general course of study authorized at each institution of higher education, including research universities, regional universities, comprehensive community colleges, and now technical colleges. While statute offers general outlines of the types of credentials allowed by institutional role, the Board may clarify the primary credentials that each institution offers through [Policy R401, Approval of New Programs, Program Changes, Discontinued Programs, and Program Reports](#). Under the Utah Code, institutional boards of trustees may approve new programs that fall within the institution's role if they meet the criteria defined by the Board of Higher Education. If an institution is proposing a new program that falls outside of its institutional role, it must seek approval from the Board of Higher Education rather than the board of trustees.

In July of 2022, the Board placed a moratorium on out-of-role instructional program approvals pending an update to Section 7 of Policy R401, which outlines the principles for out-of-role program requests, and asked the Academic Education Committee to determine general principles to be included in the section update. During its April 2023 meeting, the Committee asked the Office of the Commissioner to strengthen principles around determinations of workforce development, the economic necessity of a program, and the quality with which the institution is already fulfilling its primary role to allow the Board to lift the moratorium on out-of-role program considerations.

The attached draft provides a redlined update to Section 7 of Policy R401. **Only Section 7 is being updated at this time.** The Office of the Commissioner has begun but not yet completed an extensive update to the entirety of Policy R401 to include technical education programs and distinguish them from academic programs, to reflect changes in accreditation requirements that affect degree programs, and to incorporate additional programming, including short-term training and basic instruction at technical colleges. The more extensive updates to the remainder of the policy will be forwarded to the Board once completed.

The Academic Education Committee met on May 12 to review the draft of Section 7 and voted to forward it to the full board for review and approval.

Commissioner’s Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends that the Board approve the update to Section 7 of Policy R401 in order to lift the moratorium on out-of-role program proposals.

Attachment