



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

May 18, 2023

Policy 312, *Institutional Roles and Missions*

The Utah Board of Higher Education is responsible for establishing, approving, and overseeing each institution's mission and role in accordance with [Utah Code § 53B-1-402](#) and [53B-16-101](#). The Board uses Policy 312, *Utah System of Higher Education and Institutional Missions and Roles*, to define each of the institution types represented in statute. The Board needs to update the policy to include the distinct roles of technical colleges and to clarify the roles of degree-granting institutions, within the parameters outlined in the Utah Code.

The Utah Code defines the following institutional roles and designations:

- **Research Universities:** University of Utah; Utah State University
- **Regional Universities:** Weber State University; Southern Utah University; Utah Tech University; Utah Valley University
- **Community Colleges:** Salt Lake Community College; Snow College
- **Technical Colleges:** Bridgerland Technical College; Davis Technical College; Dixie Technical College; Mountainland Technical College; Ogden-Weber Technical College; Southwest Technical College; Tooele Technical College; Uintah Basin Technical College; Salt Lake Community College*; Snow College*; Utah State University Eastern, Blanding, Moab*

**Degree-granting institutions that provide technical education*

Earlier this year, the Board designated a small task force comprised of Board Member Hope Eccles, Associate Commissioner Kim Ziebarth, and Associate Commissioner Julie Hartley to evaluate institutional roles and missions and make recommendations for necessary policy updates. In April, the task force presented its recommendations to the Academic Education and Technical Education Committees. The committee recommended that Policy R312 should establish general principles for institutional roles: to focus on institutional excellence; ensure access for all types of students (traditional & nontraditional students, underserved, underrepresented, urban, rural, and adult students); avoid unwise duplication of programs, resources, and effort; promote quality, efficiency and accountability; meet the state's workforce needs; and benefit surrounding communities. The also recommended that the policy should prioritize the value and quality of program offerings and the ability of institutions to fulfill their primary roles and missions.

Both the Academic Education and Technical Education Committees voted to approve the recommendations and ask the Commissioner's Office to draft policy updates based on them.

The Academic Education Committee met again on May 12, with several other board members in attendance to discuss the drafts and recommended a few changes. They voted to forward the policy drafts to the full Board for review and approval.

The attached draft incorporates the recommendations from both committees. It has been vetted with the Council of Presidents, chief instructional officers of technical colleges, and chief academic officers of degree-granting institutions. It is now ready for review and approval by the full Board.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends that the Board review and approve the attached draft of Policy R312. The Commissioner, the task force, and the Council of Presidents also recommend that, after the completion of the NCHEMs Community College Study, the Board engage in detailed conversations about the changing demographic and workforce needs of the state and whether institutional roles as currently defined are adequate to meet them.

Attachment