

R131, Review and Approval of Centers for Compliance with Equal Opportunity Initiatives¹

R131-1 Purpose: This policy outlines the process for Board of Higher Education (“Board”) review and approval of centers at Utah System of Higher Education (“USHE”) institutions in compliance with equal opportunity initiatives under Utah law.

R131-2 References

2.1 Utah Code § 53B-1-118, Prohibited Discriminatory Practices – Exceptions

R131-3 Definitions

3.1 “Personal Identity Characteristics” is as defined under Utah Code section 53B-1-118(1)(b).

3.2 “~~Student Resource or~~ Cultural Center” (“Center”) means a program, office, initiative, administrative unit, sub-unit, committee, or center that an institution has established or seeks to establish ~~that is to serve a~~ focused on a specific culture, population, or group based on a personal identity characteristic.

R131-4 Center Requirements: Under this policy, a center:

4.1 Must be focused on cultural education, celebration, engagement, and awareness;

4.2 Must be designed to provide opportunities for all students to learn with and from one another; and

4.3 Cannot provide student resources, influence student participation in programs, or promote differential treatment of students based on personal identity characteristics.

R131-5 Board Approval Required: To ensure compliance with Utah Code section 53B-1-118, an institution must seek Board review of an existing center, and Board approval of a proposed center.

¹ Adopted June 6, 2024; amended August 30, 2024; and March 27, 2025.

R131-6 Center Proposal: An institution seeking Board review or approval of a center shall submit a proposal to Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (“OCHE”). The proposal shall include the culture, population, or group the center serves or will serve, as well as information about how the center will meet the requirements of subsections 4.1 through 4.3.

R131-7 OCHE Assessment: OCHE shall provide an assessment for the Board to use when determining whether to approve a proposal for a new or existing center. As part of that assessment, OCHE will review the proposal submitted by the institution, including whether the center will be compliant with Utah Code section 53B-1-118 and how it meets or will meet the requirements of subsections 4.1 through 4.3.

R131-8 Board Approval Considerations: OCHE will provide its assessment, including recommendations, to the Board and the Board will determine whether to approve the proposed center.

8.1 When making its determination, the Board shall consider whether the new or existing center complies with Utah Code section 53B-1-118 and meets the requirements of subsections 4.1 through 4.3.

8.2 Additional Information: When determining whether to approve or deny a center, the Board will review the OCHE assessment and may request more information or consultation.

R131-9 Program Approval: Although an institution may receive Board approval under this policy to operate a center in compliance with Utah Code section 53B-1-118, the institution must also follow the program approval process under Board Policy R401, *Approval and Modification of Instructional Programs and Academic Administrative Units within Role, Mission, and Designated Service Region*.

R131-10 Reporting to the Board: USHE institutions shall report annually to the Board by June 30 how many students each center served during the previous academic year.