

## Utah System of Higher Education Enrollment

### *Meeting the Education Needs of Utah's Diverse and Changing Population*

As Utah's population continues to grow, it is also changing. "Projections by the Bureau of the Census indicate that, holding these definitions of race and ethnicity constant, by 2050 the groups currently classified as "minorities" will collectively become the national majority. If Utah does indeed continue to be a net in- migration region (as expected), the minority population should approach one-third (30 Percent)". (Perlich, 2008). The Utah State Board of Regents is using these projected population changes to ensure the higher education needs of Utah's changing population are being met.

### Educational Attainment Gap

IPEDS graduation rate data<sup>1</sup> compiled by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) for all Utah post-secondary institutions and found difference in completions rates between by race/ethnicity groups (figure 1).

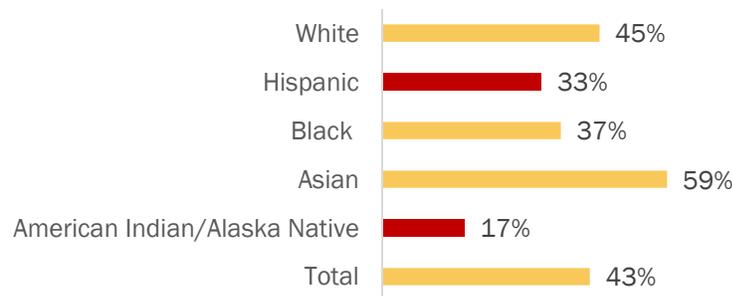


Figure 1 - WICHE: UT Population Snapshot / IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey 2016

Additional information provided by WICHE using the American Community Survey (ACS) 2015-16 data, suggest that the lower completion rates contribute to educational attainment gaps between race/ethnic populations in Utah (Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup> IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey reports on the percent of First-time, Full-time entering students who complete their degree program within 150% of the degree length (e.g. 6 years for a Bachelor's degree, 3 Years for an Associate Degree). A student must be both a first-time and full-time student during a fall semester to be included in the survey.

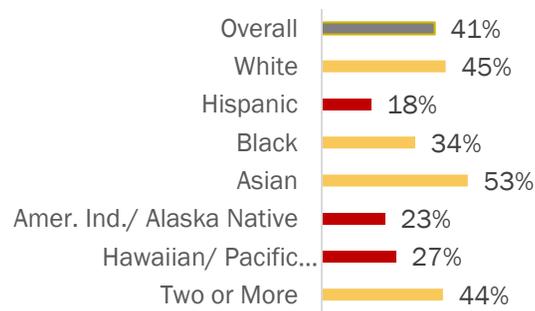


Figure 2 - WICHE: UT Population 25-64 Associate Degree or Higher, ACS 2015-16 5 Year Estimates

## Utah Population Compared with USHE Enrollment

The current Utah population of 18-34 year-olds is largely white (ACS, 2016). USHE student enrollments mirror Utah’s population diversity along race-ethnic lines. The Hispanic population is the fastest growing group as well as the group with the largest gap between representation in the population and enrollment in USHE institutions (Table 1).

Table 1 - Population Percentage Comparisons UT 18-34, USHE Enrollment Fall 2017, USHE Completions 2017

	<i>American Indian</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Pacific Islander</i>	<i>Two or More</i>	<i>White</i>
<b>State</b>	1.2%	2.8%	1.3%	14.6%	1.1%	1.9%	77.1%
<b>USHE Enrollments</b>	0.7%	2.7%	1.3%	12.6%	0.8%	3.1%	76.4%
<b>USHE Completions</b>	0.7%	2.9%	0.9%	8.9%	0.4%	2.3%	83.8%

### *Enrollment Gaps*

An analysis of enrollment and completion gaps at individual USHE institutions was also completed. This data is based on comparisons of the 18-34-year old population in their USHE designated service area as determined by the 2015-16 ACS 5-year estimates. The ACS identified student population is compared to the institution’s enrollments and completions from the same service counties (based on a self-report county- of-origin and race/ethnicity). Similar patterns of enrollment and attainment gaps by minority students are observed at almost all institutions (Figure 3).

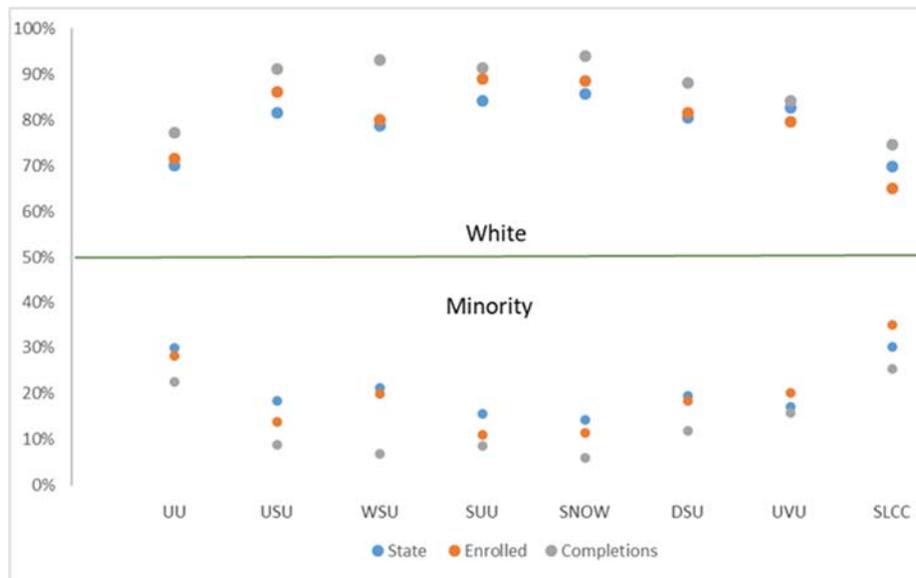


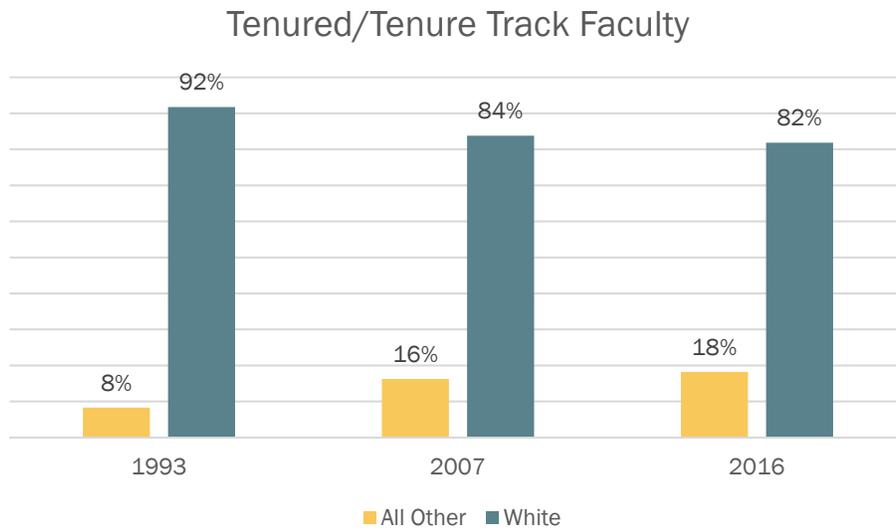
Figure 1 - Population, Enrollment, Completion, by State Service Area of Institution

With the exception of UVU and SLCC, the percentage of minorities enrolled underrepresents the percentage of minorities in each of the given service regions. While UVU and SLCC do a better job at enrolling minority students, those students still lag when it comes to actual completions. This lag manifests itself in the continued educational attainment gap in overall 18-65 population in the state of Utah.

### Employment Gaps

“Campus leadership, including a diverse faculty, plays an important role in achieving an inclusive institution. Faculty’s curricular decisions and pedagogy, including their individual interactions with students, can foster inclusive climates. Also, students report it is important that they see themselves reflected in the faculty and curriculum to which they are exposed to create a sense of belonging and inclusiveness. Research suggests that greater representation of underrepresented groups among faculty may increase students’ sense of academic validation” (Hurtado, S., Ruiz Alvarado, A., 2013).

The latest U.S. Census estimates Utah’s general population is 78.5% white, non-Hispanic. USHE institutions percentage of white (non-minority) faculty is 82%. USHE institutions have increased the percent of minority (non-White) tenure (tenure track) faculty from only 8% in 1993 to 18% in 2016 (figure 4).



*Figure 2 - IPED HR Tenure- Tenure Track Faculty by Ethnicity*

## Taking action

The Utah State Board of Regents is taking steps in two primary areas to close the educational attainment gap at Utah's eight public colleges and universities:

- By 2022 provide a college advisor for every Utah high school focusing on underserved students, including ethnic minorities, to provide direct personalized assistance in making college opportunities an affordable reality.
- A comprehensive evaluation of tuition policies and state financial aid programs to ensure the right students are getting the right resources to help them pay for college, especially students from underserved populations.

The pace of change in today's economy is making today's students fast become tomorrow's lifelong learners. The Board of Regents is expanding its focus on improved transferability of credit and credentials previously earned, as well as awarding credit for competencies gain outside the classroom. This focus will expand the access opportunities for underserved and nontraditional students, a significant proportion of who are from ethnic minority populations.

**Citations:**

Census, U.S. Bureau of, Population Division (2008) *Projections of the Population and Components of Change for the United States: 2010 to 2050* in Perlich, P, (2008)

ACS, (2016), U.S. Bureau of Census, American Communities Survey 2016 5-year estimate data, Downloaded, American Factfinder [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml?\\_afz=10](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml?_afz=10) 10/2018

Hurtado, S., Ruiz Alvarado, A., (2013) "Diversity in Teaching and Learning: Affirming Students as Empowered Learners," *Diversity and Democracy* 16(3) (Summer 2013) in U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development and Office of the Under Secretary, *Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education*, Washington, D.C., 2016. <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/advancing-diversity-inclusion.pdf>

Perlich, P., (2008) *Utah Demographic Transformation: A view into the Future*, Utah Economic and Business Review, V. 68, N 3. Pg.6. Downloaded 9.26.2018 <http://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/UEBRVolume68Number3-1.pdf>