

UTAH SYSTEM OF TECHNICAL COLLEGES

Strategic Plan 2017-2025

*Integrated with Governor Gary R. Herbert's
Utah Statewide Education Plan*

Adopted by USTC Board of Trustees March 23, 2017



Anchor 1: Increase Content Proficiency and Achievement for Every Student

The Utah System of Technical Colleges will increase student achievement and content proficiency by:

- A. Assuring that all technical college programs and courses align with current and future career competencies needed by Utah's employers, through direct employer involvement with employer advisory committees, and in cooperation with the Department of Workforce Services, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, and Economic Development Corporation of Utah.
- B. Increasing the numbers and enhancing the role of employer representatives who participate in each program employer advisory committee, validate program competencies and employment demand, and provide appropriate and accountable work-based learning that leads to employment opportunities.
- C. Engaging K-12 and USHE education providers in employer advisory committees to develop educational and career pathways and stackable credentials.
- D. Developing appropriate and accountable work-based learning opportunities (e.g., externships, work-site experiences, clinical, etc.) with supportive and rigorous parameters for every accredited certificate program. Some continuing occupational education courses may involve work-based learning opportunities.
- E. Continuous improvement of the tracking of competency mastery in USTC's student information system.
- F. Achievement of completion rates that meet or exceed accreditation standards for each certificate program.
- G. Achievement of placement rates that meet or exceed accreditation standards for completers of each certificate program.

Anchor 2: Expand Access, Participation, and Completion

The Utah System of Technical Colleges, in conjunction with its technical colleges, will expand opportunities for access, participation, and completion of postsecondary education by:

- A. Continuing and enhancing focus on the System's role in providing career and technical education culminating in a postsecondary certificate.
- B. Increasing the awareness and improving the perception of the value of career and technical education by Utah stakeholders, industry and government, citizens, parents, and students.
- C. Increase annual attainment of board-approved technical college postsecondary certificates from 8,150 in FY 2016 to 11,492 in FY 2020, in support of Governor Herbert's Utah Education Plan.
- D. Maintaining an annual certificate award rate from FY 2021 to FY 2025 consistent with annual population growth and statewide certificate-level workforce needs in the population.
- E. Increasing the number of secondary students who complete and are awarded postsecondary certificates by USTC colleges prior to or following their high school graduation.
- F. Increasing the numbers of certificate programs offered as market-driven postsecondary pathways for students to: (1) obtain gainful and skilled employment; and (2) obtain stackable credentials through USHE institution affiliations with linkages to associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees.
- G. In conjunction with secondary education providers, providing increased opportunities and encouragement for high school students to participate in, complete, and continue articulated pathways and stackable credentials that lead to employment, experience, and degrees.
- H. Expanding opportunities, resources, and encouragement for individuals challenged by intergenerational poverty, underemployment, or other disadvantages to enroll, complete certificates, and obtain gainful and secure employment; and enhancing the tracking and reporting of services and outcomes for disadvantaged students.
- I. Developing and expanding access to courses and programs at nontraditional times and through nontraditional methods.

Anchor 3: Enhance Educator Preparation and Professional Practice

The Utah System of Technical Colleges, with its technical colleges, will increase the effectiveness of educators, administrators, and staff who support education by:

- A. Developing discipline-specific faculty and staff networks across all colleges that collaborate throughout the year in sharing best industry, teaching, and professional practices.
- B. Continuous improvement of System-wide professional development conferences and college professional development activities.
- C. Developing and increasing opportunities for faculty experiences in the industries they teach.
- D. Developing opportunities in every program for current industry practitioners to participate in mentoring faculty and in teaching and mentoring students through classroom and lab-based instruction, job shadowing, and work-based learning opportunities (e.g., externships, work-site experiences, clinicals, etc.).
- E. Creating and expanding internal and external programs, opportunities, and credentials for technical educator development.
- F. Utilizing instructional designers throughout the System to help colleges and programs develop curriculum, faculty, and staff.

Anchor 4: Identify and Target Resources to Maximize Outcomes

The Utah System of Technical Colleges and its colleges will target and efficiently use resources to maximize identified outcomes by:

- A. Working with legislators, partners, and stakeholders to identify needs and secure state funding for budget and capital priorities consistent with strategic planning and state needs.
- B. Implementing performance-based funding focused on setting and achieving rigorous college-specific goals for continuous improvement.
- C. Developing partnerships with businesses and industry to help provide equipment, funding, and instruction.
- D. Developing statewide career and technical education funding initiatives in collaboration with industry, USHE, public education, DWS, GOED, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature to identify and secure resources needed for specific high-priority industry or economic sectors.
- E. Developing and securing funding through grants and initiatives such as TalentReady Utah, Strategic Workforce Initiatives, and federal grants and programs.

Anchor 5: Meet Critical Economic and Employer Needs

The Utah System of Technical Colleges and its colleges will respond to state and local economic needs, supply necessary workers, and meet changing requirements of a skilled workforce by:

- A. Assuring that all college programs and courses align with current and future career competencies needed by Utah's employers, through direct employer involvement with employer advisory committees, and in collaboration with the Department of Workforce Services, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, and Economic Development Corporation of Utah.
- B. Increasing the numbers and enhancing the role of employer representatives who participate in each program employer advisory committee, validate program competencies, and provide appropriate and accountable work-based learning that leads to employment opportunities.
- C. Facilitating placement opportunities for completers of each certificate program to enter related employment.
- D. Targeting program development and funding to meet needs of specific industry sectors through CTE initiatives, Strategic Workforce Initiatives, etc.
- E. Promoting and increasing the awareness and broadened use of the Custom Fit program to serve new clients each year; to support economic development targeted to information technology, manufacturing, and other sectors with critical economic impact in partnership with the Utah Technology Council, the Utah Manufacturers Association, and other industry associations; and to assist Utah employers in all sectors in continuous improvement of skills of their employees.
- F. Working with industry, legislators, and partners to secure additional state Custom Fit funding to meet identified statewide needs.

Anchor 6: Enhance Partnerships

The Utah System of Technical Colleges, in conjunction with its colleges, will establish or enhance partnerships with other education agencies, non-profit organizations, communities, business and industry, and families by:

- A. Promoting acceptance within the Utah culture to create and reinforce a dual path that begins in high school and can lead directly to gainful and quality employment within a year of high school completion and into stackable credentials beyond through the achievement of technical college postsecondary certificates.

- B. Collaborating systematically with industry, USHE and its institutions, public education, DWS, GOED, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature to best meet the needs of Utah citizens for education, workforce development, and a healthy economy.
- C. Accelerating public awareness efforts to reach increased numbers of employers, students and parents with a goal of increasing participation of high school and adult students in career and technical education programs.
- D. Working with the State Board of Education and Local Education Agencies to increase the number of secondary students who enroll in technical college courses and who complete and are awarded postsecondary certificates prior to or following their high school graduation.
- E. Working with the State Board of Regents and USHE institutions to articulate technical college postsecondary certificates with postsecondary degree programs while maintaining a primary focus on market-driven postsecondary pathways for students to obtain gainful and skilled employment.
- F. Increasing the engagement of employers and business/industry organizations in college program employer advisory committees, enhancement of Custom Fit, and identification and utilization of industry certifications and licensures.
- G. Establishing additional partnerships with Utah companies which will promote curriculum that targets the immediate and specific needs of those companies for technically-skilled workers.

Anchor 7: Adopt Innovative and Evidence-Based Practices

The Utah System of Technical Colleges, working with its technical colleges, will adopt innovative and evidence-based practices by:

- A. Enhancing Northstar integration with college testing software, CANVAS learning management system, and other information systems.
- B. Enhancing the delivery model for colleges to promote technical training and leveraging of highly-compensated, difficult-to-hire instructors across the state which includes Custom Fit, use of remote delivery technology, online delivery, blended learning etc.
- C. Increasing the use of technology-enhanced instruction and blended learning, including availability of tools required for attendance and assessment verification.

Anchor 8: Enhance Outcome Reporting

The Utah System of Technical Colleges will enhance reporting of outcomes to all stakeholders by:

- A. Enhancing the richness and accuracy of outcome reporting for the certificate-seeking, job upgrade, secondary, continuing occupational education, and “other training” categories of student enrollment.
- B. Developing placement practices that provide consistency for and enhance the richness of college reporting of employment, additional education, and other outcomes for students.
- C. Continuous improvement in processes for developing and reporting on applicable licensure and industry certifications for completers of technical college programs and courses.
- D. Continuous improvement in accuracy, completeness, and consistency of System and college data reported to accrediting agencies, federal agencies (e.g., IPEDS, Perkins, Gainful Employment, etc.), and the State of Utah; and leveraging of the college student information systems in the improvement of reporting.
- E. Enhancement of institutional research processes and results utilizing System and collaborative statewide education, workforce, and economic data for data-driven college and System improvement.