

R312, Utah System of Higher Education and Institutional Missions and Roles¹

R312-1 Purpose: To establish the distinct missions and roles of the institutions in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and foster economic growth and innovation.

R-312-2 References

- 2.1 [Utah Code Title 53B, Chapter 6](#), State System of Higher Education – Master Planning
- 2.2 [Utah Code § 53B-16-101](#), Establishment of Institutional Roles and General Courses of Study
- 2.3 [Board Policy R310](#), System-wide Vision and Mission Statements
- 2.4 [Board Policy R315](#), Service Area Designations and Coordination Off-Campus Courses and Programs
- 2.5 [Board Policy R485](#), Faculty Workload Guidelines

R312-3 Definitions

- 3.1 **“Roles”** means the general category within which an institution fits as described in Utah Code § 53B-16-101, Establishment of Institutional Roles and General Courses of Study.

- 3.2 **“Mission Statements”** means written statements of the general purposes and functions of various institutions approved by the Board.

- 3.3 **“Teaching Load”** means the institutional average teaching workload for full-time faculty at the various institutions.

- 3.4 **“Open Admission”** means an admission policy that allows all applicants to be admitted. An open admission policy does not necessarily grant students to all courses until the institution has assessed the student’s level of preparedness.

R312-4 Institutions Roles and Missions

- 4.1 **Research Universities:** A research university’s role is to provide undergraduate, graduate, and research programs and to discover, create and transmit knowledge through academic programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional with emphasis on teaching research

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and service. Transfer programs allow students to seamlessly seek degrees and other institutions within the system. The institution contributes to the quality of life and economic development at the local, state, and national levels. Many research efforts generate grants and contracts that also impact economic development, which underwrites the cost of their products. The University of Utah and Utah State University are research universities.

4.1.1 University of Utah Mission Statement (2016): The University of Utah fosters student success by preparing students from diverse backgrounds for lives of impact as leaders and citizens. We generate and share new knowledge, discoveries, and innovations, and we engage local and global communities to promote education, health, and quality of life. These contributions, in addition to responsible stewardship of our intellectual, and financial resources, ensure the long-term success and viability of the institution.

4.1.2 Utah State University Mission Statement (2003): The mission of Utah State University is to be one of the nation's premier student-centered land grant and space grant universities by fostering the principle that academics come first; by cultivating diversity of thought and culture; and by serving the public through learning, discovery, and engagement.

4.2 Regional Universities: The regional university's role provides career and technical education, undergraduate associate and baccalaureate programs, and select master's degree programs to fill regional or state workforce demands. After a new master's degree program's fifth year, the program should be awarding a minimum average of five degrees per year as measured over a previous three-year period to be considered sustainable. Regional universities emphasize teaching, scholarly, and creative achievements that complement teaching and community service. Transfer programs allow students to seamlessly seek degrees at other institutions within the system. The institution contributes to the quality of life and economic development at the local and state levels. Student success is supported through developmental programs and services associated with a comprehensive community college. Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Utah Valley University, and Utah Tech University are regional universities.

4.2.1 Weber State University Mission Statement (2007):

Weber State University provides transformative educational experiences for students of all identities and backgrounds through meaningful personal connections with faculty and staff in and out of the classroom. The university promotes student achievement, equity and inclusion, and vibrant community relationships through multiple credentials and degree pathways, experiential learning, research, civic engagement, and stewardship.

4.2.2 Southern Utah University Mission Statement (2016): Southern Utah University is a dynamic teaching and learning community that engages students in

experiential education, leading to personal growth, civic responsibility, and professional excellence.

4.2.3 Utah Valley University Mission Statement (2007): Utah Valley University is an integrated university and community college that educates every student for success in work and life through excellence in engaged teaching, services, and scholarship.

4.2.4 Utah Tech University Mission Statement (2016): Utah Tech University is an open, inclusive, comprehensive, polytechnic university featuring active and applied learning to advance students' knowledge and skills while fostering competent, resilient, lifelong learners to succeed in their careers and personal lives as creators, innovators, and responsible citizens.

4.3 Comprehensive Community Colleges: The comprehensive community college's role is to transmit knowledge and skills through transfer education at the associate of arts and associate of science degree level along with offering associate of applied science degrees, career and technical education, customized training for employers, developmental education, and strong student services to support these functions. Transfer programs prepare graduates to begin upper-division work. The institution emphasizes teaching, training, scholarly, professional, and creative achievement, community service and contributes to the quality of life and economic development of the community and the state. The comprehensive community college's role is identifiable in its organizational structure and is supported through programs, service, and specific administrative responsibility. Salt Lake Community College and Snow College are comprehensive community colleges. All institutions except the University of Utah provide varying degrees of community college functions in their respective service areas.

4.3.1 Snow College Mission Statement (2011): Snow College continues a tradition of excellence, encourages a culture of innovation, and cultivates an atmosphere of engagement to advance students in the achievement of their educational goals.

4.3.2 Salt Lake Community College Mission Statement (2016): Salt Lake Community College is your community college. We engage and support students in educational pathways leading to successful transfer and meaningful employment.

R312-5 Polytechnic Education: Degree-granting institutions may adopt a polytechnic educational model, which is a student-centered, comprehensive, interdisciplinary, applied learning model that integrates the liberal arts with intensive science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs and that prepares graduates for professional careers in collaboration with industry partners to meet regional economic and workforce needs.

5.1 Institutions that adopt a polytechnic educational model have not altered their statutory and Board designated roles and shall maintain strategic planning, academic programs, communications and marketing that reflect those roles.

R312-6 Accreditation: Specialized accreditation is a goal for all programs for which this accreditation is available and appropriate for the institution's mission and role.

R312-7 Faculty

7.1 Criteria for Selection, Retention, and Advancement

7.1.1 Research Universities: Faculty are selected, retained, and promoted on the basis of evidence of effective teaching; research, scholarship, and creative achievements; and service and extension activities.

7.1.2 Regional Universities: Faculty are selected, retained, and promoted primarily on the basis of evidence of effective teaching. Additional criteria include scholarly, professional and creative achievements, and service that complements the teaching role.

7.1.3 Comprehensive Community: Faculty are selected, retained, and promoted primarily on the basis and evidence of effective teaching and training. Secondary criteria include scholarly, professional, creative achievements, and service that complement the teaching role.

7.2 Educational Preparation

7.2.1 Research Universities: Regular full-time tenure-track faculty will have earned the appropriate terminal degree for their field and specialty.

7.2.2 Regional Universities: Regular full-time tenure-track faculty will have earned or be working toward the appropriate terminal degree for their field and specialty. Faculty in career and technical education or professional fields also will have practical, related work experience.

7.2.3 Comprehensive Community Colleges: Regular full-time tenure-track faculty will have practical, related work experience and recognized professional credentials for their discipline and teaching level. To teach courses in general education or other special transfer programs, the master's degree is a standard requirement.

7.3 Teaching Loads and Research Activities

7.3.1 Research Universities: Average teaching loads are expected to be lower than that of faculty in regional universities reflecting necessary faculty involvement with research, scholarship, and creative achievements. Institutional teaching loads will average at least 18 credit hour equivalents each academic year.

7.3.2 Regional Universities: Average teaching loads are higher than those of faculty in research universities. These teaching loads reflect regional universities having fewer graduate programs and less emphasis on research and scholarship than research institutions. Institutional teaching loads will average at least 24 credit hour equivalents each academic year.

7.3.3 Comprehensive Community Colleges: Average teaching loads are somewhat higher than those of faculty in regional universities, because faculty do not have extensive research responsibilities. Institutional teaching loads will average at least 30 credit hour equivalents each academic year.

R312-8 Student Admission

8.1 Research Universities: Research universities are selective in admissions.

8.2 Regional Universities: Regional universities are open-admission institutions unless otherwise excepted by the Board of Regents. Regional universities may test or assess students for directed course placement, the ability to benefit from specific courses for financial aid purposes, and the students' projected ability to succeed.

8.3 Comprehensive Community Colleges: Comprehensive Community Colleges are open-admission institutions. Incoming students may be tested or assessed for course placement and the ability to benefit from specific courses for financial aid purposes.

R312-9 Support Services

9.1 Research Universities: These institutions provide library services, support services, equipment, and other resources to support undergraduate and graduate programs, and student and faculty research.

9.2 Regional Universities: These institutions provide library services, support services, equipment, and other resources to support undergraduate programs, a limited number of master's programs, and the needs of students and faculty.

9.3 Comprehensive Community Colleges: These institutions provide library services, student support services, equipment, and other resources to support lower-division programs in career and technical education, general education, developmental education, transfer programs, and the needs of students, faculty, and the community.