



UTAH SYSTEM OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# MEMORANDUM

January 9, 2025

## Shared Services Update

[Utah Code section 53B-1-402](#) requires the Utah Board of Higher Education to maximize efficiency throughout the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) by identifying and establishing shared administrative services, beginning with:

- Commercialization;
- Services for compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972;
- Information technology services; and
- Human resources, payroll, and benefits administration.

USHE has been making progress on its shared services initiatives in all these areas.

### **Commercialization**

The commercialization shared service for USHE is designed to accelerate the transformation of innovative ideas and research from campuses into real-world solutions. By leveraging a centralized approach, the service equips faculty, researchers, and students across USHE institutions with the tools, resources, and infrastructure needed to bring their innovations to market. A key initiative includes the development of a commercialization training course that helps professors build essential business acumen, focusing on critical areas such as market assessment, intellectual property management, and business strategy. The course also connects professors with industry leaders and commercialization experts, providing mentorship and real-world insights to help them navigate the process. Another vital component of the shared service is the tech transfer consortium, which brings together technology transfer offices across USHE institutions to share best practices, combine resources, and streamline commercialization efforts. Recent updates include new technology assessments that better identify and support high-potential innovations, enabling schools to accelerate commercialization and drive measurable economic impact.

In addition to its foundational efforts, the shared service is advancing new initiatives and partnerships to expand its impact and strengthen Utah's innovation ecosystem. By supporting industry associations and ecosystem events, the team is creating meaningful opportunities for students, researchers, and professionals to connect with emerging trends and opportunities. A key milestone is the successful launch of the annual Utah AI Summit, a statewide event that fosters collaboration and accelerates innovation in artificial

intelligence. The shared service has also hosted and supported university pitch competitions and collaborative innovation events across the state, providing valuable platforms for students and faculty to showcase ideas and build connections with industry leaders. Further collaborations, such as with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) working group, have united federal and state partners to align efforts and drive progress on critical initiatives. We have monthly industry meetups that offer students and professors direct access to industry professionals, equipping them with practical insights, business development strategies, and meaningful relationships. We are engaging with each satellite university innovation ecosystem to ensure personalized support that fits their unique goals. These partnerships allow us to align resources, tackle specific challenges, and create new opportunities to strengthen innovation pathways. By connecting students, educators, and industry leaders, we are driving entrepreneurial success and reinforcing the shared service's role as a key hub for innovation across the state. We are engaging with each satellite university innovation ecosystem to ensure personalized support that fits their unique goals.

Currently in development is Project Match, an online talent hub platform designed to connect Utah students with high-impact projects that are directly tied to industry. The platform will allow Utah companies to post internship opportunities, giving students direct access to meaningful projects that align with their skills and aspirations. It will also facilitate corporate research collaborations by connecting students and researchers with companies looking to solve real-world challenges. Additionally, Project Match will feature an operator database to link businesses with skilled operators who can support project execution and business development. Finally, the platform will help connect venture funds to promising startups, fostering investment, and strengthening Utah's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Together, these initiatives are creating stronger pathways for innovation, empowering entrepreneurial goals, and solidifying the shared service's role as a key connector for students, educators, and industry leaders across the state.

## **Title IX**

The USHE Title IX shared services working group proposed the following degree-granting institution/technical college partnerships for advancing common Title IX resources, training, and best practices:

- Utah State University – Bridgerland Technical College
- Weber State University – Ogden-Weber Technical College and Davis Technical College
- Southern Utah University – Southwest Technical College
- Snow College – Uintah Basin Technical College
- Utah Tech University – Dixie Technical College
- Utah Valley University – Mountainland Technical College
- Salt Lake Community College and Utah State University – Tooele Technical College
- University of Utah – Provide specific Title IX services to the System

After feedback from Title IX coordinators, institutional general counsels, and presidents, the above USHE institutions are working to sign memorandums of understanding that agree to shared Title IX services, including:

- **Collaboration:** Quarterly meetings among Title IX coordinators to share updates, best practices, and techniques for reducing litigation risks.
- **Training:** Pooled training between institutions with a specific effort to not duplicate vendor-provided training costs.
- **Investigator/Hearing Officer Services:** Shared investigator, hearing officer, and hearing chair coverage (as opposed to contracting with a vendor) in the event a conflict of interest disqualifies an institution's own staff from handling a Title IX investigation and/or hearing process.
- **Informal Resolutions:** Explore options for informal resolution services for USHE institutions provided by the University of Utah's S.J. Quinney College of Law's proposed Conflict Resolution Clinic.
- **Annual Training:** Annual training provided by the University of Utah on Title IX complaints, investigative processes, hearings, and appeals.

Concurrent with the new Title IX shared services partnership arrangements, the Commissioner's office will continue to offer annual Title IX-required training to all USHE institutions, model Title IX policies, procedures, templates, and will facilitate the bi-monthly USHE Title IX Coordinators consortia group.

## **Cybersecurity**

The Board directed the Office of the Commissioner's chief information officer (CIO) and institutional CIOs to collaborate on shared cybersecurity services to ensure that all USHE institutions are meeting established cybersecurity standards. The CIOs created a working group to identify methods to share services and strengthen system-wide cybersecurity. The working group is reviewing self-funding licenses, tools, staff, pooling resources, and sharing costs to promote efficiency and savings systemwide. The Office of the Commissioner is submitting a legislative budget request for \$3,000,000 for cybersecurity software and tools to assist with this initiative.

## **Human Resources, Payroll, and Benefits Administration**

### *Employee Health Insurance Benefits*

The Commissioner's office issued an RFP to determine and evaluate the feasibility of options for shared employee health insurance benefits for USHE institutions. Milliman was selected as the contractor and will provide the following services:

- Research and study employer-provided health insurance benefits among the sixteen USHE institutions, including elements of coverage, costs, and value;
- Identify implications to USHE institutions and the system as a whole associated with various

degrees of employer-provided health benefit consolidation, including estimates for fiscal and administrative impacts to institutions and any potential changes to coverage, benefit richness, and cost sharing for employees; and

- Summarize costs and benefits across a continuum of options for consolidating employer-provided health benefit functions across USHE institutions. Provide the Commissioner's office and the Board with a recommendation for which option to pursue based on multiple objectives including cost, quality, efficiency, competitiveness with respect to employee compensation, and continuity of coverage.

This contract was recently executed and Milliman has already gathered a significant amount of data from USHE institutions. They will prepare an initial feasibility study report by February 2025, which will include a recommendation for a shared employee health benefits model based on cost, quality, efficiency, and competitiveness with respect to employee compensation and continuity of coverage. After Board review and recommendation, Milliman will assist in writing an RFP for services to select a vendor to implement the recommendations selected by the Board.

#### *Payroll System for Technical Colleges*

In its March 2024 meeting, the Board directed the Office of the Commissioner to issue an RFP for technical colleges' payroll shared services, identify the most appropriate technical college payroll system, and execute outsourced services as soon as possible. A technical college payroll system review working group, comprised of representatives selected by the presidents of each technical college, reviewed the responses to the RFP and participated in product demonstrations from each of the four responding vendors. UKG was rated by the working group as the vendor with the highest technical score and the lowest cost proposal. Therefore, UKG was selected as the vendor to provide a unified payroll system to the technical colleges. Technical colleges have signed the master services agreement with UKG. During the upcoming months, UKG will provide training, software implementation, and data migration. Payroll services will begin starting July 1, 2025.

Prior to the implementation of the UKG system, there have been five different payroll systems used across the eight technical colleges. This shared services initiative will provide consistency and uniformity across the technical colleges and will lay a foundation of system connectedness as other shared services are evaluated. This system will consolidate operations at the various institutions. For example, the UKG system will incorporate the payment of payroll taxes and the filing of payroll tax returns, thus improving efficiencies and reducing the risk of errors. This will also eliminate certain staff responsibilities at some institutions, freeing staff to engage in other institutional duties.

The UKG system is projected to save approximately \$80,000 over what technical colleges are currently paying for payroll services. Institutions plan to use that savings to increase the capabilities of their Human Resource information systems, providing better services to employees.

**Commissioner’s Recommendation**

This is an information item only. No Board action is required at this time.