

## Access – Talking Points

- SLCC is the largest open access institution in Utah. We believe higher education should be available to anyone who wishes to obtain it.
- Because we are Open Access, we have the most diverse student body in the state, and inclusivity is one of our most important values. We seek to cultivate an environment of respect and empathy, advanced by diverse cultures and perspectives.
  - We provide targeted student support designed to encourage equity, inclusivity and diversity that supports making quality education accessible to all, including:
    - A thriving Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, which supports underrepresented students through mentoring, success coaching, workshops, cultural programming and more.
    - Multicultural mentoring programs, like Brother to Brother (designed to improve the educational experience and promote successful college completion among **African American, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander and other underrepresented students**) and Amigos Mentores (helping Hispanic students reach their academic goals with educational and social support).
    - Student associations and unions that assist underrepresented students. These include the Black Student Union, the Asian Student Association, Latinx Student Union, Rainbow Pride Club/Queer Student Association, American Indian Student Leadership and the Pacific Unity Association.
    - Resources and support for undocumented students, including the recently opened Dream Center, which promotes college access through outreach, individualized advising and scholarship assistance for undocumented students.
  - Our efforts to provide access to underserved populations is paying off – as an institution, our goal is have our enrollment directly reflect the population of Salt Lake County. We measure enrollment equity through a minority student participation ratio. If the college has an equal proportion of minority populations as that of the surrounding community, the ratio equals 1:1. Currently, the ratio is .96:1.
  - SLCC is proud to serve a large population of first-generation college students. We estimate 56 percent of SLCC students are the first in their families to attend college, far outpacing Utah’s other state colleges and universities.
    - These students need additional support because they often don’t have family resources to turn to when faced with questions and challenges with college life, and according to the National Center for Education Statistics, they are more likely to withdraw from school.
    - One of the ways our institution supports first-gen students is through the federally funded TRIO programs. TRIO specifically assists Pell-eligible and first-gen students so they can access college, graduate from SLCC and transfer to a four-year institution.
      - TRIO offers free support services, including individualized academic and transfer planning, financial planning for both school and life and tutoring. Peer mentors also help first-gen students learn skills to deal with the rigors of college.
    - First-gen and other underrepresented students can also access higher education through the Partnerships for Accessing Higher Education (PACE) program.

- PACE helps guide high school students toward college through advising, academic support, job shadowing and a guaranteed two-year scholarship to SLCC (for students who complete the program).
    - The college-going rate in Salt Lake County has been decreasing over the past several years. This trend is disturbing because Utah needs a well-educated and skilled workforce in order to maintain its strong economic growth and high quality of life.
    - SLCC plays an important role in ensuring that higher education is available to all. This is important because in Utah college grads earn 68 percent more than non-grads. Higher ed provides people with more opportunities and can literally break the cycle of inter-generational poverty. We want all students to have access to that opportunity.
  - SLCC makes college geographically accessible by operating multiple campuses, offering online courses and engaging in outreach programs.
    - We operate 11 campuses or centers throughout the Salt Lake Valley, including Taylorsville Redwood, South City, Miller, Jordan, West Valley, Meadowbrook, Library Square, Salt Lake Airport, Herriman and Westpointe. With so many locations, students find that their future is close to home.
    - Westpointe is our newest campus and a crown jewel for SLCC. We partnered with local industry to develop a state-of-the-art learning facility that provides training in key industries and trades.
      - Westpointe has helped encourage more underrepresented populations to seek education and training. Since opening Westpointe, our Latino participation rate in trade education has increased from 11 percent to 19 percent, and our female participation rate in trade education has risen from 8 percent to 15 percent.
    - We also bring learning directly to students by offering more than 700 individual classes online.
      - Students can review lessons, interact with classmates and instructors, and approach assignments and exams with more flexibility, as well as take advantage of college resources like tutoring, coaching and advising.
      - More than 10,000 students currently take online classes at SLCC, and an increasing number of two-year degrees, including business and criminal justice, can be earned entirely online.
    - SLCC is committed to providing higher education to more communities. We are currently partnering with the University of Utah to one day build a single campus for both schools in Herriman. At the future Herriman campus, a student will be able to attend SLCC and receive an associate's degree and then continue on to earn an undergraduate degree from the U – all in one location.
      - Herriman, located in the far reaches of Salt Lake County, has a higher-than-average high school graduation rate but a lower-than-average college-going rate. A comprehensive campus in Herriman would allow residents in fast-growing Southwest Salt Lake County to more easily access higher education.
  - SLCC engages in select outreach programs to offer higher education to more people.
    - We began our Prison Education Program in 2017 at the Utah State Prison. It's a model for inclusive and transformative education in the lives of incarcerated students.
      - The program is based on the idea that every human being deserves an education, and it helps enhance students' re-entry into mainstream society and changes the way incarcerated men and women see themselves as individuals and as members of the larger community.
      - Students in the program can earn an associate's degree in general studies.

- The program also ultimately saves money for the Utah taxpayer. According to the Center for American Progress, for every \$1 spent on prison education taxpayers save \$4 to \$5 on incarceration costs.
  - Incarcerated individuals who participate in any type of education program while in prison are 43 percent less likely to recidivate.
- We partner with local high schools to make college available to high school students through our concurrent enrollment program. This program prepares high school students with the skills and courses they need to get a head start on a college education, and for a lower cost.
  - Our concurrent enrollment program allows students to take college classes for \$5 per credit, a significant savings over the usual cost of \$494 per credit. Credits count toward a college degree or certificate and are transferable to other institutions.
  - More than 8,500 Utah high schools students participate in our concurrent enrollment program, which offers more than 100 classes throughout the Salt Lake Valley.
  - Concurrent enrollment is a valuable tool for encouraging college completion. Many students complete a significant number of college courses by the time they graduate from high school, and the pass rate for concurrent enrollment classes is 93 percent.