

Access and Affordability – Talking Points – 2023-24

Access

- SLCC believes higher education should be available to anyone who wishes to pursue it.
- The college-going rate in Salt Lake County has been decreasing over the years. This trend is concerning because Utah needs a well-educated and skilled workforce to maintain strong economic growth. SLCC's commitment to access helps Utah fulfill its workforce needs.
- College access is also important because in Utah college grads (with 4-year degrees) earn 33% more than non-grads. Higher education can provide people with opportunities that can break the cycle of inter-generational poverty.
- We make college accessible by maintaining multiple campuses and offering online classes.
 - We operate 8 locations, which ensures higher education is geographically available to more students. Our locations include Taylorsville Redwood, South City, Miller, Jordan, West Valley, Salt Lake Airport, Herriman, and Westpointe.
 - Our Westpointe Campus is the result of a partnership with local industry to develop a state-of-the-art learning facility that provides training in key industries and trades.
 - Our Herriman Campus is our newest facility and is a unique partnership with the University of Utah. Students can attend SLCC to earn an associate's degree, and then continue on to earn an undergraduate degree from the U, all at one location. Herriman opened in August 2023.
- We also bring learning directly to students by offering more than 1,700 individual classes online.
 - In 2022 and 2023, [Newsweek](#) magazine named SLCC one of the top online learning schools in the country.
 - Students can review lessons, interact with classmates and instructors, and approach assignments and exams with more flexibility. College resources like tutoring, coaching and advising are also available.
 - More than 10,000 students take [online classes at SLCC](#), and some two-year degrees, including business and criminal justice, can be earned entirely online.
- We ensure education is available to all by embracing inclusivity, and the result is we have the most diverse student body in Utah. We promote equity and diversity through several organizations and programs, including:
 - [SLCC Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs](#), which supports underrepresented students by offering coaching, workshops and cultural programming.
 - [Multicultural mentoring programs](#), like [Brother 2 Brother](#) (designed to promote successful college completion among African American, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander and other underrepresented students) and [Somos Mas](#) (supports students of color in reaching their academic goals).
 - [Student associations and unions](#) that assist underrepresented students. These include the [Black Student Union](#), [Global Connections](#), [Multicultural Student Council](#), [Asian Student Association](#), [LUCHA \(Latinx United for Change and Activism\)](#), [Queer Student Association](#), [American Indian Student Leadership](#), [Kurdish Student Leadership Club](#) and [Pacific Unity Association](#).

- [Resources for undocumented students](#), including the [SLCC Dream Center](#), which supports college access through outreach, advising and scholarships.
 - [Accessibility and Disability Services Department](#), which helps make accommodations for eligible students including adaptive equipment (smart pens, specialized keyboards, etc.), alternative for text materials (Braille, audio texts), assistive software (speech-to-text and screen-reading software), testing accommodations, adaptive furniture, sign language interpreters and note takers.
 - [Emerging HSI](#), is a federal designation SLCC received in 2021. The college is currently working toward full HSI status and is an affirmation of our dedication to inclusive education.
 - Efforts to provide access to underserved populations is paying off – our goal is for our enrollment directly reflect the population of Salt Lake County. We measure enrollment equity through a minority student participation ratio. Currently, 33% of our students identify as people of color.
- SLCC is proud to serve many first-generation college students, with 46 percent of our students being first in their families to attend college. Programs that promote educational access for these students include:
 - [TRIO](#) – The federally funded TRIO program assists Pell-eligible and first-gen students in graduating from SLCC and transferring to a four-year institution. The program offers individualized academic and transfer planning, financial planning for school and life, and tutoring services. Peer mentorship is also available to help first-gen students learn skills to deal with the rigors of college.
 - [Partnerships for Accessing Higher Education \(PACE\)](#) -- PACE guides high school students from underrepresented populations toward college through advising, academic support, job shadowing and, for those who complete the program, a guaranteed two-year scholarship to SLCC.
- SLCC engages in select outreach programs to offer higher education to more people, including:
 - [Prison Education Program \(PEP\)](#) – Since 2017, our program at the [Utah State Correctional Facility](#) has been a model for inclusive and transformative education in the lives of incarcerated students and is based on the idea that every human being deserves an education. Students in the program can earn an associate’s degree in general studies.
 - The program facilitates students’ re-entry into mainstream society and changes the way the incarcerated see themselves as individuals and as members of the larger community.
 - The PEP also saves taxpayer money. According to the [Brookings Institution](#), for every \$1 spent on prison education, \$4 to \$5 is saved on incarceration costs.
 - Those who participate in any type of education program while in prison are 48% less likely to recidivate.
 - We make college available to high school students through our [concurrent enrollment](#) program.
 - Concurrent enrollment allows students from participating Utah high schools to take classes that count toward a college degree for \$5 per credit. Credits are also transferable to other institutions.
 - We offer 100+ concurrent enrollment classes to more than 9,000 high school students.

- Concurrent enrollment is a valuable tool for promoting college completion. Many students earn a significant number of college credits upon graduation from high school, and the pass rate for concurrent enrollment classes is 93%.

Affordability

- SLCC is one of Utah’s most affordable higher education institutions.
 - Our students are unique – 78% work while attending college, and we have many students with family responsibilities. Keeping costs low helps our students successfully meet all their commitments while minimizing student loan debt.
 - Our affordable tuition and fees ensure that students seeking baccalaureate degrees can save \$10,000 by first earning their associate’s degree at SLCC and then transferring to one of the state’s universities.
- SLCC offers many programs to make college more affordable, including:
 - [SLCC Promise](#) – Since 2016, SLCC Promise has helped students cover the cost of tuition when federal grants fall short.
 - Some students may only receive a partial federal grant. SLCC Promise covers the remaining gap.
 - Currently, Promise is available to full-time students carrying 9 or more credit hours.
 - Our Financial Aid Office can help students complete the federal financial aid application. Once a student applies for aid, they are automatically considered for SLCC Promise.
 - [Open SLCC](#) – This initiative replaces textbooks with free, online educational resources.
 - Some students delay taking a class or take fewer classes due to the high cost of books. By reducing textbook costs, Open SLCC reduces helps minimize delays in earning a degree or certificate.
 - A student can earn an associate’s degree in general studies at SLCC and pay no textbook costs. If this same student is eligible for SLCC Promise, they can earn their degree at virtually no cost.
 - Since its debut in 2014, Open SLCC has saved students \$24 million in textbook costs.
 - Students needing assistance with the cost of books beyond what is available through Open SLCC may apply for book vouchers to use at the college bookstore.
 - [SLCC Scholarships](#) – More than 100 private scholarships are available to students through the SLCC Foundation.
 - Students only need to complete one application to be considered for any SLCC scholarship.
 - Students who receive scholarships are twice as likely to graduate from college.
- Other services provided by SLCC that help keep college affordable:
 - [On-campus Child Care](#) – Daycare centers are located at our Taylorsville Redwood, South City and Jordan campuses.
 - Currently, single parents make up more than a third of the school’s student parent population. Having access to low-cost childcare is necessary for these students to be able to attend college.
 - [Health and Counseling Centers](#) – The school operates three Health and Counseling Centers (located at Taylorsville, South City and Jordan) to encourage healthy bodies, minds and lives.

- Health screenings, counseling, diagnosis and disease management services, immunizations and massage therapy sessions are available to all students for a \$15 fee per office visit.
- **Free Transportation** – Many of SLCC’s campuses are accessible via transit. To help students manage transportation costs, we provide each student with a free pass good on all of Utah Transit Authority’s regular services, including bus, streetcar, TRAX and FrontRunner.