

**P**ostsecondary education has been proven to reduce recidivism and promote more successful transitions back into communities for adults returning from incarceration.<sup>1</sup> However, currently incarcerated and reentering adults often face barriers to receiving high-quality postsecondary education. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, with support from Lumina Foundation, conducted an intensive 50-state scan and survey of the statutory, financial, and administrative policies and practices that impact the provision of postsecondary education for this population. This fact sheet outlines the research findings for Utah.



## HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

### Correctional Agency Funding

- The Utah legislature may appropriate state funds for college programs in state correctional facilities.<sup>2</sup> One way this is done is by using facility telephone surcharge proceeds to fund educational programming.<sup>3</sup> Postsecondary education is funded through self-pay<sup>4</sup> and private sources.<sup>5</sup>
- Utah is not using Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds for postsecondary education and did not apply for/receive Second Chance Pell pilot funding.<sup>6</sup>

### State Financial Aid

- The largest state financial aid programs have a statutory restriction that prevents applicants with criminal records, except misdemeanor traffic violations, from accessing the awards.<sup>7</sup> In 2019, the Access Utah Promise Scholarship Program was created; it does not have any statutory restrictions preventing currently or formerly incarcerated individuals from accessing the award.<sup>8</sup>



## WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

### Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- In partnership with the Utah Department of Corrections, Davis Technical College, Dixie State University, Snow College, and Uintah Basin Technical College,<sup>9</sup> provide career and technical education in auto mechanics, building trades, business technology, culinary arts, machining, and welding.<sup>10</sup>

### Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- Incarcerated students may participate in postsecondary correspondence courses geared toward college credit at the student's own expense or through funding sources from nonprofit organizations or private entities.<sup>11</sup>
- Associate degrees are offered through the Prison Education Program at Salt Lake Community College.<sup>12</sup> Once individuals have successfully completed their probation or parole, they must repay some portion of the tuition back to the program.<sup>13</sup>
- Utah does not provide bachelor's degrees.<sup>14</sup>

### Labor Market, Employer Feedback, and Outcome Data Alignment

- Utah has identified local labor market trends as the primary factor that determines the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.<sup>15</sup>



### WHAT RESTRICTIONS OR BARRIERS ARE IMPOSED ON ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION?

#### Statutory or Administrative Requirements, Permissions, and Restrictions

- Participation in postsecondary education programs is based on custody level and behavior during incarceration.<sup>16</sup>
- If withdrawn from an education program for disciplinary reasons, a person will be eligible to reenroll within six months after their withdrawal.<sup>17</sup>

#### Use of Criminal History in State College and University Applications

- Utah has seven state universities, and only The University of Utah used the 2019–2020 Common Application.<sup>18</sup> The school added questions asking applicants to disclose their criminal history.
- Two of the six state colleges and universities that do not use the Common Application require students to disclose their criminal history: Dixie State University and Utah State University.



### WHAT INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS EXIST TO ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION?

#### Statutory or Administrative Benefits

- People who are incarcerated can earn a “four-month statutory earned time credit” to reduce their sentence by attending postsecondary education programs.<sup>19</sup>
- Compensation may incentivize people who are incarcerated to participate in postsecondary education programs.<sup>20</sup>

#### Parole Conditions Related to Postsecondary Education

- Post-release participation in postsecondary education can meet a parole requirement to seek or obtain employment.<sup>21</sup>

#### Coursework Transfer Policies

- The parole-granting agency provides information on postsecondary education, but not occupational training, postsecondary education advisors and coordinators, and vocational credential testing.<sup>22</sup>

#### Coursework Transfer Policies

- Utah Department of Corrections has articulation agreements with schools offering programming in the correctional facilities, which state that courses and degree programs offered in the correctional facilities are equivalent to those offered in the community and indicate what credits can be transferred.<sup>23</sup> Snow College and Davis Vocational both allow enrollment of students after their incarceration and provide them with an admissions counselor to assist them with enrollment.<sup>24</sup>

1. Lois M. Davis et al., *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR266.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html).
2. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
3. Ibid.
4. "Prison Education," Salt Lake Community College, accessed July 1, 2019, <http://www.slcc.edu/prison-education/index.aspx>; Utah Code Ann. § 64-13-30.5; "Programs for Inmates," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed July 1, 2019, [https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1060&Itemid=185](https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1060&Itemid=185).
5. Prison Education," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed July 1, 2019, [https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=825;prison-education&catid=2&Itemid=315](https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=825;prison-education&catid=2&Itemid=315).
6. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
7. Regent's Scholarship, Utah Code Ann. § 53B-8-203(4)(c); New Century Scholarship, Utah Code Ann. § 53B-8-105(5)(c).
8. Utah Code Ann. § 53B-8-303.
9. "Programs for Inmates," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed November 22, 2019, [https://corrections.utah.gov/index.php?Itemid=185&id=1060&option=com\\_content&view=article](https://corrections.utah.gov/index.php?Itemid=185&id=1060&option=com_content&view=article).
10. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
11. "Prison Education," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed July 1, 2019, [https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=825;prison-education&catid=2&Itemid=315](https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=825;prison-education&catid=2&Itemid=315); "Programs for Inmates," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed July 1, 2019, [https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1060&Itemid=185](https://www.corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1060&Itemid=185).
12. "Prison Education," Salt Lake Community College, accessed July 1, 2019, <http://www.slcc.edu/prison-education/index.aspx>; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
13. "Prison Education," Salt Lake Community College.
14. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
15. Ibid.
16. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019; "Wasatch," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed November 22, 2019, <https://corrections.utah.gov/index.php/family-friends/prison-facilities/18-draper-facilities>.
17. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
18. The Common Application, an undergraduate college application system, recently removed its required criminal history question, but maintains its questions on disciplinary infractions. However, colleges on the Common Application can add questions regarding criminal conviction or disciplinary information to their individualized applications.
19. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019; "Earned Time Credit Programs," Utah Department of Corrections, accessed November 22, 2019, [https://corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1099&Itemid=344](https://corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1099&Itemid=344). See also Utah Code Ann. § 77-27-5.4.
20. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
21. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
22. Ibid.
23. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
24. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019; Prison Education," Salt Lake Community College, accessed July 1, 2019, <http://www.slcc.edu/prison-education/index.aspx>. Email correspondence between CSG Justice Center and UDC, December 30, 2019.