

UTAH COLLEGE OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY

AGENDA ITEM

UCAT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

8 June 2016

ITEM: II.K

TOPIC: Policy 206 – Student Placement Reporting

BACKGROUND

In November 2015 the Office of the Legislative Auditor General released its report, “A Performance Audit of CTE Completion and Job Placement Rates”. Therein, auditors questioned the validity of UCAT placement rates because in many instances, instructors themselves report students’ placement information, creating a lack of independence. Among the audit’s recommendations was that UCAT “review its campus’ [colleges’] placement data collection methods and make improvements to ensure independence and data validity.”

In its January 14, 2016 meeting, the Board of Trustees instructed the Office of the Commissioner and college presidents to develop a comprehensive policy to be used in assessing student placements beginning in FY 2017. The trustees instructed that the new policy include guidance to the colleges to enhance the independence of placement data, as recommended by the legislative audit. In spring 2016 the Office of the Commissioner convened a working group of personnel from each college to draft the policy. Additional input was received from college presidents.

Policy 206 – Student Placement Reporting, mirrors placement definitions and standards set forth by the Council on Occupational Education, but also establishes procedures by which placement information is audited annually by an independent committee comprised of personnel from other colleges under the direction of the Office of the Commissioner.

The final draft of Policy 206 – Student Placement Reporting, is attached here.

RECOMMENDATIONS

UCAT administration recommends the Board of Trustees adopt Policy 206 – Student Placement Reporting, for implementation beginning in FY 2017.

Attachments:

UCAT Policy 206 – Student Placement Reporting (proposed draft)



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206.1 Purpose

To specify criteria, definitions, processes, data collection, reporting, and verification of placements achieved by Certificate-seeking Completers at UCAT colleges.

206.2 Approval

UCAT Board of Trustees approval: June 8, 2016 (pending)

Effective date: Applicable to reporting for all Certificate-seeking Completers (as defined in Policy 205.6.1.2) on or after July 1, 2016.

206.3 References

UCA 53B-2a-102, Commissioner of Technical Education – Appointment – Duties
UCA 53B-2a-104, Utah College of Applied Technology Board of Trustees – Powers and Duties
UCAT Policy 205, Student Enrollment and Completion Reporting

206.4 Definitions

- 4.1 Placement:** A measure of Certificate-seeking Completers documented as having received related employment, enlisted in the military, or enrolled in additional education, as detailed in 206.6.1. This definition is explicitly intended to be congruent with the current year's definition of "placement" adopted by the Council on Occupational Education (COE).
- 4.2 Placement Rate:** The percentage of Certificate-seeking Completers eligible and available for employment who were placed, as provided in 206.7.1. Conceptually, this is a measure of the likelihood that a student seeking work who completes a certificate program will be placed in related employment, military, or additional education.

206.5 Student Placement Reporting

- 5.1 Placement Classification:** For each Certificate-seeking Completer during a reporting period (as specified in Policy 205.6.1.2), a UCAT college shall document, classify, and report the most applicable of the placement categories provided in this policy.
- 5.2 Data Submission:** Placement data shall be submitted in accordance with Policy 205.11.
- 5.3 Data Consistency:** In cases where a college reports data elements defined within this policy to an external entity such as an accrediting organization or federal agency, the college shall apply the definitions herein insofar as they qualify within the parameters of the external entity's provisions.



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206.6 Certificate-seeking Placement Categories

Each Certificate-seeking Completer defined in 205.6.1.2 shall be documented and classified by the college in the most applicable of the following placement categories. For categories other than “Placed”, the college shall follow up and update the student’s status in the data submissions provided in Policy 205.11.

- 6.1 Placed:** A Certificate-seeking Completer who, as demonstrated by documented evidence:
 - 6.1.1 Related Employment:** Is employed in the field of instruction pursued or in a related field (valid employment includes a permanent full- or part-time position with an employer or employment agency, or self-employment); or
 - 6.1.2 Military:** Has entered the military; or
 - 6.1.3 Continued Education:** Is enrolled as a regular student at another UCAT college or other post-secondary educational institution, is enrolled in another program (Policy 200.4.1) at the college, or has continued enrollment in the current program in pursuit of an additional Program Certificate (Policy 200.4.3).

- 6.2 Not-seeking/Pending:** A Certificate-seeking Completer who is not seeking employment or whose eligibility for employment is pending, as demonstrated by documented evidence that the student:
 - 6.2.1 Unavailable:** Is unavailable for employment at the time of data submission because of situations that preclude permanent employment such as pregnancy, serious health-related issues (physical/mental/behavioral), caring for an ill family member, incarceration, death, service with a foreign aid service of the federal government such as the Peace Corps, an official church mission, etc.; or
 - 6.2.2 Not Seeking:** Is enrolled in the program of instruction strictly for personal use, failed to keep employment interview appointments, or refused an employment offer in the field of instruction; or
 - 6.2.3 Licensure Pending:** Is waiting for a licensure exam or its results in a field requiring licensure, and is not already employed in a position related to the field of instruction.

- 6.3 Not Placed:** A Certificate-seeking Completer who is not documented as Placed (206.6.1) or Not-seeking/Pending (206.6.2) at any time before the data submission (206.5.2). Students considered Not Placed include Certificate-seeking Completers who:
 - 6.3.1 Unrelated Employment:** Are employed in a position not related to the field of instruction; or
 - 6.3.2 Refused:** Have refused to provide placement information to the college; or



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6.3.3 **Unknown:** Whose placement status is unknown.

206.7 Student Placement Rates

UCAT and college student placement rates shall be calculated and reported as follows for every student who qualified as a Certificate-seeking Completer (as specified in Policy 205.6.1.2) of a program during a reporting period.

7.1 Placement Rate:

$$\frac{P}{P + NP} \%$$

Where:

P (Placed) = # distinct Certificate-seeking Completers Placed (206.6.1)

NP (Not Placed) = # distinct Certificate-seeking Completers Not Placed (206.6.3)

“Distinct” means each certificate-seeking student who completes is counted only once.

Students who are Not-seeking/Pending (206.6.2) at the end of the reporting period are excluded from the Placement Rate.

206.8 Documentation

8.1 Documented evidence of each student placement provided in this policy shall be retained by the college in a secure electronic or physical file for audit purposes.

8.2 Each UCAT college shall have written internal policies and/or procedures ensuring the validity and accuracy of collected placement data, in accordance with Council on Occupational Education standards.

206.9 Placement Verification Committee

9.1 There is established a Placement Verification Committee comprised of at least one and no more than three representatives from each applied technology college appointed by their respective college presidents on or before February 1 of each year. The Office of the UCAT Commissioner shall be notified of each appointment by February 1 of each year. At least one Committee member from each college shall be currently certified by the Council on Occupational Education to participate in accreditation team visits, and shall have participated in at least one team visit prior to his or her appointment.

9.2 Before March 15 of each year, excluding years in which the college is scheduled to receive a COE reaffirmation visit, each college shall be visited by a member or members of the Placement Verification Committee assigned by the Office of the Commissioner. No college shall receive a visit from the same Committee member, nor Committee members representing the same applied technology college, more than once every three years.



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- 9.3** During college visits, Placement Verification Committee members shall examine placement plans and placement follow-up plans, evaluating them according to criteria established by the Council on Occupational Education. Committee members shall use their assigned visits to collaborate and share ideas how to improve placement follow-up procedures.
- 9.4** The Office of the UCAT Commissioner shall select a random sample of Certificate-seeking Completers from each college from the most recently completed fiscal year for verification of placement status. Placement Verification Committee members shall verify the statuses of sampled students reported by their assigned college (206.9.2) during their visit. Verification of reported student placement shall be performed utilizing any of the following:

 - 9.4.1** Phone calls placed to employers;
 - 9.4.2** Phone calls placed to Certificate-seeking Completers;
 - 9.4.3** Examination of Department of Workforce Services or Utah System of Higher Education student data matches; or
 - 9.4.4** Examination of placement documentation retained by the college that is deemed valid and independent in the professional judgment of Placement Verification Committee members. The nature of such documentation shall be described in Committee members' reports to college presidents (206.9.5) and the UCAT Commissioner (206.9.6).
- 9.5** Each member of the Placement Verification Committee shall report observations, concerns, and any failure to verify placement statuses at levels acceptable to the Council on Occupational Education to the applied technology college president at the conclusion of the visit.
- 9.6** Committee members shall report to the Office of the Commissioner in an official letter whether the visited college met placement verification standards established by the Council on Occupational Education within ten working days of the visit, and no later than March 15 of each year.
- 9.7** Placement Verification Committee members' appointments shall expire upon the conclusion of their responsibilities described herein.