

2020

AIS HIGHLIGHTS



UtahStateUniversity®
ACADEMIC & INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES



A Message from the Vice President



One of the most overstated observations of 2020 is how this year has been like no other.

As I take a moment to reflect, I am amazed at the resilience of USU's faculty, staff, and students who adapted to COVID-19's "new normal." What started out as a promising year with aggressive enrollment management goals, academic innovations, new faculty development programs, and exciting student success initiatives quickly shifted to a focus on rapidly migrating from face-to-face courses to remote learning and supporting faculty and students in teaching and learning. Summer 2020 was then spent preparing for a very different

fall 2020 that included social distancing, virtual recruiting events, and expanding remote delivery while increasing our digital dependence and expertise. Academic and Instructional Services has been proud to support the university in these endeavors. As we close out this challenging year, I am happy to share some of highlights from our division that I consider bright spots in 2020 and building blocks for 2021 that further enhance our focus on quality, accessibility, and innovation.

Robert W. Wagner, Ph.D.

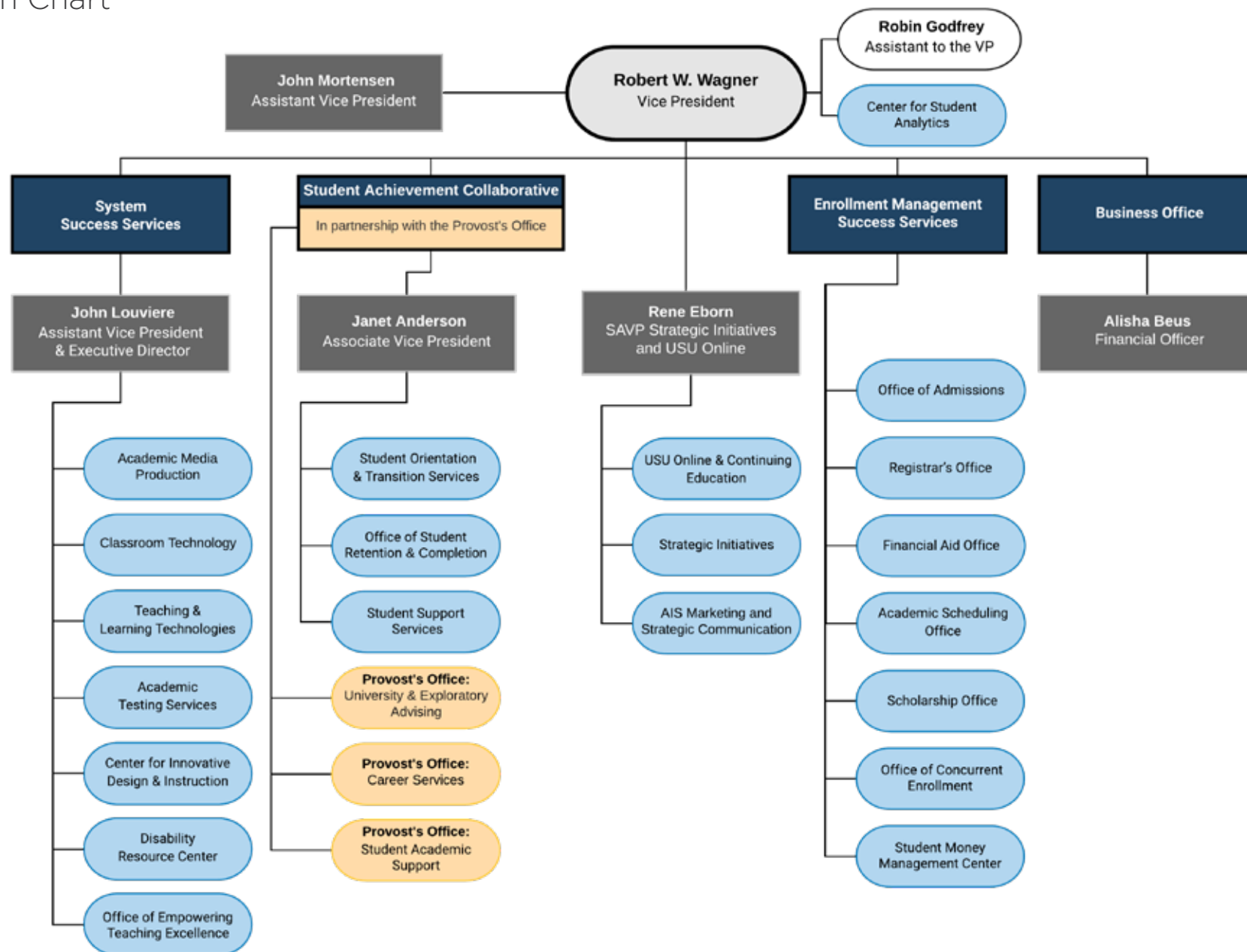
Vice President

Academic & Instructional Services



Academic & Instructional Services

Organization Chart





Innovating Education

Empowered by AIS

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General Academic & Instructional Services

New Position Focuses on USU Students Outside of Logan

USU named Anca Matcovschi as director of statewide and online recruitment with the goal of increasing enrollment throughout Utah, and to further partnerships that accommodate employee education. This position allows Matcovschi to integrate efforts among the many university groups who interact with Utah's location-bound students, many of whom are working professionals with busy lives.

AIS Offices Focus on Recruitment and Yield Efforts Amidst COVID-19

Last spring, the Admissions, Student Orientation & Transition Services, and Scholarship Offices quickly teamed up to assist incoming and returning

students whose next steps were suddenly uncertain due to COVID-19. For incoming students, virtual campus tours and a live chat were created, and communication with returning students included virtual "What's Next Wednesdays" and informational podcasts.

Student Achievement Collaborative

New Provisional Admissions Program Introduced

Beginning in fall 2020, USU introduced a Prep Academy for prospective students who do not meet index score requirements for admission into a bachelor's degree program. These students are placed as a cohort into a Strategies for Academic Success course and begin studies for an associate degree in General Studies. They can continue to a USU bachelor's degree if they meet requirements.

Earned Admissions Program Pilot

In fall 2020, USU introduced an earned admissions program for new freshmen that do not meet admission requirements. Students can complete three self-paced online courses in

English, math, and study skills to then be considered for admission. Students taking these courses do not pay university tuition or earn college credit; the courses cost \$125 per month and are intended to develop necessary skills to be successful at USU.



Office of Student Orientation & Transition Services

New Aggie Podcast Helps Parents and Families of USU Students

Parents can now subscribe to the “Aggie Parent and Family Podcast,” which includes information on topics such as campus safety, academic advising, diversity and inclusion, and supporting students as they enter their second semester. The regularly posted podcasts are available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or through usu.edu/parents/podcast.

1010 Connections Course Sees Record Enrollment

Despite format changes due to COVID-19, a record number of students participated in USU’s 1010 Connections in 2020. The two-credit course is designed to ease transition into college life and also

provides a year-long mentoring experience, so new students can connect with a faculty mentor and remain in contact through their first two semesters.



Student Retention & Completion

USU Celebrates 2020 Graduates

The Aggie community found creative ways to celebrate USU’s 2020 graduates despite the cancelation of the spring commencement ceremony. President Noelle Cockett and 2020 valedictorian Mealii Enos released a video congratulating grads, while others put a special USU frame on their Facebook profile pictures, posted messages on social media platforms using the hashtag #USUGRAD20, sent emails to graduates they knew, and wore Aggie blue attire on April 30.

Sending the Celebration Home

All 2019-20 graduates—about 6,000 grads from summer 2019, fall 2019, and spring 2020—received a personal graduation celebration box at their home. The boxes contained their diploma, a commencement program, a letter from President Noelle Cockett, and a bunch of Aggie gear to celebrate their accomplishment.

Supplemental Instruction Seeing Success with Live Online Sessions

The Office of Student Retention & Completion has transitioned its Supplemental Instruction (SI) program to live online sessions. All sessions are held via Zoom and completely voluntary. The remote SI program averaged 5-10 students per session during the fall, with more students also taking advantage of recorded sessions on course Canvas pages.

TRIO Student Support Services Grant Awarded to Utah State

TRIO SSS has been operating at USU since 1989, providing academic support for approximately 2,500 students over that time. The program was awarded a \$1.74 million continuing grant to support students on the Logan campus who are first-generation, low-income, and/or experience disability. This funding should support TRIO SSS for five additional years, beginning fall 2021 and running through spring 2026.



Center for Innovative Design & Instruction (CIDI)

A Massive Undertaking: How USU Staff Supported the Move to Remote Learning

On March 12, USU began the process of moving 750 spring semester courses online, to be available by March 18. The Center for Innovative Design and Instruction tapped into resources across the university, including students in the Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences program. Thanks to tools like online chat support and assisting faculty with putting more than 7,000 hours of video online, the transition went as smoothly as possible. CIDI then continued to provide training through workshops, conference sessions, and consultations to more than 1,000 faculty members. It also significantly expanded website tutorials, which reached nearly 190,000 page

views over the COVID-19 teaching period. Throughout spring and fall, CIDI staff responded to thousands of phone calls and hundreds of chats. All of these efforts helped lead to the successful rollout of new delivery methods during summer and fall.

Office of Empowering Teaching Excellence

Seven USU Teaching Scholars Receive Professional Development Awards

The ETE's Committee for Scholar Awards announced its 2020 cohort of scholars: Jocelyn Cuthbert, Julia Gossard, Karin deJonge-Kannan, Lianne Wappett, Sarah Tulane, Shawn Miller, and Timothy Chenette. This program funds professional development and resources associated with a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project, while also giving support in the development, implementation, and dissemination process.

Faculty Dive Headfirst into Digital Learning

One hundred twenty faculty members representing each of USU's colleges, from Logan and Statewide Campuses, attended eLearnX, a deep dive into digital-age teaching in May and August. Sponsored by ETE and the

Center for Innovative Design and Instruction, eLearnX delivered sessions using a blend of live web broadcasts and asynchronous activities, allowing faculty to experience learning in the same formats their students did during spring and summer semesters.



Office of Admissions

Record Class Comes to Logan for Fall 2020

USU saw its highest first-time student enrollment in history on the Logan campus in fall 2020, despite the challenges of COVID-19. There were 3,918 new first-time students, an increase of 163 students or 4.2% over fall 2019. The incoming class average GPA was 3.67 with an average ACT score of 24. Transfer numbers were also up, with 886 new transfers—39 students (5%) over the previous fall.

Standardized Tests Optional for Admissions in 2021

USU has suspended the ACT and SAT test requirements for undergraduate admission to all campuses for the spring, summer, and fall 2021 semesters. The change was in response to testing disruptions during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Students are evaluated for admission based on GPA, and applicants may still choose to include standardized test scores with their applications for admissions.

Making a Difference: USU Admissions Office Joins Together to Make Masks for LatinX Community

USU's Admissions Office stepped up to help provide the LatinX community in Cache Valley with face masks, gathering supplies and then making and donating masks to those in need. The team was able to donate more than 450 masks to local organizations, including the Cache Valley Immigrant and Refugee Connection, Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Parish, and YMCA Utah.

Jump Start Summer Online Program Helps Students with a Free Online Class

Funded by \$350,000 in emergency aid for the 2020 summer semester, USU offered a free online class to new, incoming students who wanted to get an early start on their education, and current students whose plans to be in Utah for 12 months were disrupted by COVID-19. The funding allowed more than 200 students to take advantage of the free three-credit hour course and also covered all associated student fees.

Academic Testing Services

A Go-To Resource on Proctoring Options

When USU moved to remote learning, Academic Testing Center staff and student employees began learning all they could about Proctorio in order to respond to faculty and student questions via phone, chat, and email. The staff remains a hub of information for Proctorio usage as well as alternative distance proctoring options.

Rapid Adjustments Keep Centers in Service

The Academic Testing Center has diligently remained in service for students and faculty despite COVID-19. Hours were expanded as capacity was decreased to accommodate demand as well as social distancing, and student employees adjusted to heightened sanitation expectations with positive attitudes.



Financial Aid Office

USU Appoints New Financial Aid Director

Heather Bryson is USU's new financial aid director. Previously, she worked as the associate director of systems and data for the Financial Aid Office. Bryson has more than six years of experience at USU, ranging from staff assistant to program coordinator to now director.

In this role, she plans to continue to support the organizational changes that have been made in the office over the last year.



Classroom Technologies

Classroom Technology Team Prepares Spaces for Hybrid Education

After campus closed in March, the six-member Classroom Technology Team prepared more than 180 classrooms for hybrid teaching, installing high-definition cameras and microphones. This equipped faculty members to teach their classes in person and online through Zoom, and record lectures for students unable to participate during scheduled class times.

Team Assists with Teaching ASL Courses

When a Communicative Disorders instructor who teaches American Sign

Language reached out for help with Zoom in their hybrid/face-to-face courses, the Classroom Technology Team provided three facilitators, all comfortable communicating in ASL, to assist. They were able to switch between and move cameras during class and ensure those joining through Zoom could see the instructor and students in the room as they communicated, so everyone could fully participate.



Registrar's Office

New Scheduling Tool Makes Registration Simple

Several USU departments partnered to customize and launch College Scheduler, a system that generates possible schedules for students based on information they enter, such as campus locations or times they can't be in class. While Banner will still be available, students are encouraged to check out this user-friendly tool to help streamline their registration process. College Scheduler can be found at usu.collegescheduler.com or accessed through the student portal.

New Online Process Streamlines Registration Changes

Students can now submit requests for registration changes or overrides online instead of on paper. Requests are routed to the appropriate major advisor or faculty member, then to the Registrar's Office for processing, with students receiving automated updates throughout the process.

Concurrent Enrollment Moves to Registrar's Office

Concurrent Enrollment has moved under the direction of the Registrar's Office and will be overseen by Toni Gibbons, assistant registrar. The Registrar's Office is in a unique position to assist with all aspects of Concurrent Enrollment, which will better serve high school students as they begin their path to USU. The concurrent.usu.edu website was recently updated with additional information and details.

Quick Response to Course Delivery Changes Keeps Registration Accurate

On March 25, the Academic Scheduling Office notified department heads of the need to adjust delivery methods for all fall face-to-face classes in the first 7-week session and the full 14-week session—and all changes needed to be final before registration began April 1. The office worked with departments to identify changes and rebuilt those

classes so students saw the correct delivery method when registering.

Thinking Ahead Smooths Spring Schedule Building

Scheduling for spring semester 2021 started on August 25, 2020. Since the majority of classes needed to change their instructional method, the office couldn't follow its usual practice of copying the prior term and adjusting as needed. Spring classes being offered as online, web broadcast, and interactive broadcast will be built at all statewide locations so students can register for the center closest to them.

Helping Students Find Spots for Studying or Class

With classrooms going unused as USU returned to remote learning to end fall semester, the office gathered available locations and times to create usu.edu/academic-support/participation_locations so students

living near campus could find a place to study or attend their online classes. Students can also go to scheduling.usu.edu and reserve space for small study groups on the Logan campus.



Graphic courtesy of ushe.edu

CHANGING LIVES
BY DEGREES FOR

25
YEARS

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ONLINE

BEST
ONLINE PROGRAMS
USNews
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2020

BEST
ONLINE PROGRAMS
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GRAD EDUCATION
2020

USU Online & Continuing Education

USU Online Celebrates 25 Years

The Utah Legislature recognized USU as a statewide leader in online education in February 2020. USU Online continues to fill the university's land-grant mission by serving students across the state and beyond, and the online infrastructure built over past 25 years was integral in preparing USU for the mass transition to online learning in March.

U.S. News & World Report 2020 Rankings

USU Online earned strong recognition in the publication's national college rankings for 2020, including: No. 6 in the nation for graduate education programs, No. 23 for online bachelor's programs, and No. 18 for bachelor's programs for veterans.

Online MBA Update

The first cohort of 23 students graduated from the Huntsman School's

online MBA program in summer 2020, many with jobs already lined up in respected organizations across the country. There are now more than 100 students enrolled in the online MBA; the program highlighted Seba Jean-Baptiste, a software engineer originally from Haiti, as its 100th recruit.

New Outdoor Industry Association Collaboration

USU Online and USU Extension joined in partnership with the Outdoor Industry Association, University of Colorado Boulder, and Western Colorado University to offer three online, self-paced, non-credit certificates focusing on public policy, increasing outdoor participation, and sustainable business innovation. USU offers the Outdoor Industry Business Certificate, focusing on sustainability in product design and supply chain.

New Master's, Bachelor's Programs

USU Online has launched several new programs: a Master of Science in Sports Management, and four new bachelor's programs in history, management, RN to BSN completion, and integrated studies, which allows students who do not meet program requirements, have amassed many credits, or simply want to finish a degree to earn a B.S. in Business Communications or Humanities and Social Services.

Additional Courses Meet Remote Demand

USU Online played a huge role in the transition to online and remote learning due to COVID-19, including the addition of 200+ online courses for fall 2020. The program also supported multiple CARES-funded offerings through Continuing Education, such as the Computer Science Certificate, Marketing & Professional Sales, and Growing Your Business programs.

Students in Competency-Based Education Pilot Program Seeing Success

A group of 20 Northrup Grumman employees have been going through a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program at USU Brigham City since fall 2019. Although they can be challenging for universities to implement, CBE programs are gaining popularity because they allow students to use their previous experience and current skills to move quickly through a degree program.





Academic Media Production

Mobilizing to Meet University-Wide Media Needs

The move to remote learning put the Academic Media Production team front and center to face a sudden huge increase in demand for video and media presentations. Not only were they creating lab, demonstration, and other hands-on learning videos for USU courses, they also facilitated live Zoom broadcasts, produced videos for the USU Ready campaign and Parent Orientation, and assisted instructors

with DIY video solutions via chat service. The team estimates it produced at least five times as much video content as previous semesters, much of which will be used in future courses.



Teaching & Learning Technologies

It's Official: Zoom Is USU's Web Broadcast and Conferencing Tool

After several months of working with faculty and staff, along with extensive testing, USU signed a license with Zoom in July to make it the official university web broadcast system for classes and the official web conferencing tool for meetings. The license allows all current faculty, staff, and students to host meetings. Zoom hosts more than 2,000 classes and meetings a day to help keep the university running during remote learning.

TLT, Aggie Math Learning Center Create Online Tutoring Option

Almost two years ago, AIS and the math department began discussing how to best provide an online math

tutoring option. Using the expertise of the Aggie Math Learning Center staff and the LTI and programming experience of TLT, a team designed and built a system to integrate with Canvas. Testing began in fall 2019, and when COVID-19 prompted the switch to remote learning, online tutoring was made available to all students in math courses. The system allows both drop-in and scheduled tutoring sessions and connects students and tutors with video and audio tools, as well as a specific math white-board system to facilitate the session. As of Dec. 1, 25 tutors in the Aggie Math Learning Center had held more than 2,200 online live tutoring sessions during fall semester.



Center for Student Analytics

Podcast Highlights Utah State's Analytics Excellence

Mitchell Colver and the USU Center for Student Analytics were featured in two episodes of the Digital2Learn podcast, which is "dedicated to exploring both what's new and what's good in the use of technology and digital learning." Colver's interviews focused on USU's mature use of analytics for higher education decision-making and equity and service to vulnerable students.

New Webinar Series Helps USU Instructors Teach Remotely

To provide instructors with information and skills suited to teaching fully remote courses, a partnership between the Office of Empowering Teaching

Excellence and the Center for Student Analytics produced a series of webinars that describes successful strategies. These 30-minute videos illustrate specific tools that faculty can use to empower their students to excel in remote learning environments.

Center for Student Analytics Explores Student Success

The center published its annual Student Insights Report after collaborating with dozens of units across campus to discover 20 data-informed insights about what helps students succeed. The report helps ensure that USU stakeholders can use its insights as a touchstone for keeping data-informed conversations moving forward.

Scholarship Office

USU Provides Scholarship Opportunities for Students Without ACT or SAT Scores

Following the announcement that USU was transitioning to a test-optional admission policy for 2021, the university is also offering alternatives to new students who were unable to take placement exams but are seeking academic merit scholarships. Students who apply for scholarships without a standardized test score will be reviewed based on GPA, high school course rigor, class rank, and other criteria.

USU Connects Thousands of Students with Scholarships

Students have been able to use the USU Scholarship Office to apply for hundreds of scholarships worth millions of dollars. For the 2020-21 academic year, there were 779 scholarships available. Some of these are split among multiple recipients, so 2,086 students have received awards totaling \$3,711,444.



Student Money Management Center

SMMC Hires Director

The new Student Money Management Center hired Darrell Harris as director. The center, located in the Student Orientation and Transition Services area in the TSC, helps students assess where they are financially and make plans

for where they want to be. Harris will provide financial coaching sessions to our students.



Disability Resource Center

Inclusion, Accessibility, and Opportunity During COVID-19

When classes moved from in-person to online, CIDI and the DRC worked together to find solutions to two urgent issues: the need to make all classes accessible, and many student employees who were suddenly left without work. They were able to use

one challenge to help solve the other, training 75 student employees from across campus to caption videos, convert PDFs to Canvas pages, and fix accessibility issues in files.





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ACADEMIC & INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

In its programs and activities, including in admissions and employment, Utah State University does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, status as a protected veteran, or any other status protected by University policy, Title IX, or any other federal, state, or local law. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations and/or USU's non-discrimination policies:

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For further information regarding non-discrimination, please visit <https://equity.usu.edu/>, or contact:

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