

R131, Review and Approval of Cultural Centers for Compliance with Equal Opportunity Initiatives¹

R131-1 Purpose: This policy outlines the process for Board of Higher Education (“Board”) review and approval of cultural centers at Utah System of Higher Education (“USHE”) institutions in compliance with equal opportunity initiatives under Utah law.²

R131-2 References

- 2.1 [Utah Code § 53H-1-504](#), Prohibited Discriminatory Practices – Exceptions
- 2.2 [Board Policy R405](#), Approval of Academic Centers and Institutes

R131-3 Definitions

3.1 “**Personal Identity Characteristics**” is as defined under [Utah Code section 53H-1-504\(1\)\(b\)](#).

3.2 “**Cultural Center**” means a program, office, initiative, administrative unit, sub-unit, committee, or center that an institution has established or seeks to establish that is focused on a specific culture, population, or group based on a personal identity characteristic.

R131-4 Cultural Center Requirements: Under this policy, a cultural center:

- 4.1 Must be focused on cultural education, celebration, engagement, and awareness;
- 4.2 Must be designed to provide opportunities for all students to learn with and from one another; and
- 4.3 Cannot provide student resources, influence student participation in programs, or promote differential treatment of students based on personal identity characteristics.

R131-5 Board Approval Required: To ensure compliance with [Utah Code section 53B-1-118](#), an institution must seek Board review of an existing cultural center, and Board approval of a proposed cultural center.

¹ *Adopted June 6, 2024; amended August 30, 2024; March 27, 2025; and October 2, 2025.*

² *Technical edits December 1, 2025.*

R131-6 Cultural Center Proposal: An institution seeking Board review or approval of a cultural center shall submit a proposal to Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (“OCHE”). The proposal shall include the culture, population, or group the cultural center serves or will serve, as well as information about how the cultural center will meet the requirements of subsections 4.1 through 4.3.

R131-7 OCHE Assessment: OCHE shall provide an assessment for the Board to use when determining whether to approve a proposal for a new or existing cultural center. As part of that assessment, OCHE will review the proposal submitted by the institution, including whether the cultural center will be compliant with [Utah Code section 53H-1-504](#) and how it meets or will meet the requirements of subsections 4.1 through 4.3.

R131-8 Board Approval Considerations: OCHE will provide its assessment, including recommendations, to the Board and the Board will determine whether to approve the proposed cultural center.

8.1 When making its determination, the Board shall consider whether the new or existing cultural center complies with [Utah Code section 53H-1-504](#) and meets the requirements of subsections 4.1 through 4.3.

8.2 Additional Information: When determining whether to approve or deny a cultural center, the Board will review the OCHE assessment and may request more information or consultation.

R131-9 Program Approval: Although an institution may receive Board approval under this policy to operate a cultural center in compliance with [Utah Code section 53H-1-504](#), the institution must also follow the program approval process under [Board Policy R401, Approval and Modification of Instructional Programs and Academic Administrative Units within Role, Mission, and Designated Service Region](#).

R131-10 Academic Centers and Institutes: Board approval for academic centers and institutes is covered under [Board Policy R405, Approval of Academic Centers and Institutes](#).

R131-11 Reporting to the Board: USHE institutions shall report annually to the Board by June 30 how many students each cultural center served during the previous academic year.