***For Immediate Release***

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**SUU Aviation Working to Change FAA Curriculum**

CEDAR CITY, Utah — Aviation schools around the country are mandated by law to adhere to the curriculum drafted by the Federal Aviation Administration under the U.S Department of Transportation. This curriculum cannot be changed or modified by schools by any means, even though requirements for what is taught have not been adequately updated since 1962. That means today’s technicians are being taught curriculum that was created more than 56 years ago, before the invention of cell phones, GPS, personal computers or the Internet. Aviation students are not prepared for real world jobs because they have been learning outdated curriculum that hasn’t been relevant in years.

Southern Utah University wants to change all of that.

SUU’s Aviation’s Director of Maintenance Jared Britt, was recently appointed chairman of the Legislative Committee for the Aviation Technician Education Council (ATEC). In addition to working with current aviation students at SUU, Britt’s goal is to get an exemption from the current curriculum from the U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington, D.C., that will allow SUU’s aviation department to teach its own, updated curriculum to coincide with future airman certification standards and better prepare students for industry jobs.

With this exemption, SUU aviation hopes to graduate better trained technicians that can be job ready upon completion of the program. Schools that continue to teach outdated curriculum are sending students into jobs where companies are spending substantial amounts of time and money training and teaching new graduates proper techniques and current regulations.

Companies like Boeing are left to retrain new graduates on basic tasks required to maintain a modern, sophisticated airplane. Boeing has been frustrated with this process and has stated, “As personnel demand increases over the next two decades, the aviation industry will need to find innovative solutions to keep pace with training requirements.”

Professionals in the aviation industry, government legislators and especially instructors at various aviation schools all agree that the outdated requirements inhibit aviation schools from keeping up with vital changes in aircraft technology.

“Outdated training mandates are more than an impediment; they hinder the aviation maintenance industry’s economic growth,” said Crystal Maguire, the executive director of ATEC and passionate advocate for changing FAA-dictated curriculum. “As the global aviation sector expands, economic forecasts predict that U.S. maintenance companies will be unable to meet increased demand because of a significant skilled worker shortage. To meet the need, training organization must produce better prepared aviation mechanics.”

If granted the exception, SUU will be allowed to utilize the method of credit hours in lieu of seat time requirements, will be able to teach with modern, advanced technology, and will encourage workforce development so the transition from graduation to career will be smooth and efficient.

The SUU exemption letter states:

“Aviation maintenance technician schools with curriculums that emulate industry realities and adequately prepare students for much needed positions will be better equipped to attract students to careers in aircraft maintenance, create job growth, and enhance an industry that already greatly benefits the public.”

Britt, along with all of SUU aviation, is pioneering an effort that aviation schools around the country will want to follow. Britt is passionate about his work and wants to see SUU be the force of good that will improve the aviation community as a whole.

“My passion comes from the consistent need to drive change,” said Britt. “The curriculum has barely changed in years. Why shouldn’t it be SUU trying to make the world of aviation a safer place by providing better training? There is a need, and we have the ability to meet that need in a way no one else ever has. I am excited to see our aviation program grow and I am proud to be a part of a university that can see the value and necessity for offering technical training along with a degree path.”

The 2018 ATEC Annual Conference will take place on March 17-20 in Washington, D.C. SUU aviation, as well as the political science department will be contributing to the conference and speaking about the curriculum issue at hand.

SUU hopes to see the exemption granted before the 2018 fall semester so the aviation department can implement its new curriculum with the next round of freshmen.

[To learn more about SUU’s aviation program visit the website.](https://www.suu.edu/aviation/)

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