Year One Self-Study Report

for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

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Contact
Wm. J. Byrnes
Associate Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies
SUU Accreditation Liaison Officer
303 Bennion Administration Bldg.
351 W. University Blvd
Cedar City, UT 84720
435-586-7703
byrnes@suu.edu
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I. THE UNIVERSITY’S HISTORY

Possessing a rich pioneer heritage, SUU has a unique history in American higher education. In 1897, Cedar City was notified it had been chosen as the site for the Branch Normal School, the first teacher training school in southern Utah.

In September of 1897, the Branch Normal School opened its doors for the first time. However, only two months into the session, the Attorney General ruled that Cedar City was not complying with the provision stating that the school must be on land deeded to the state for educational purposes. If a building was not erected by the following September, the school would be lost. Winter had already set in, when on January 5, 1898, a group of townspeople trudged into the Cedar Mountains, setting out to do the impossible. Snow had obliterated the trail they had originally blazed and the wagons could not make it and were abandoned. It was in this phase of their march that an old sorrel horse proved so valuable.

Placed at the front of the party, the horse walked steadily into the drifts, pushing and straining against the snow until it gave way. Then he would pause for a rest, sitting down on his haunches the way a dog does, heave a big sigh, and get up and start all over again. "Old Sorrel" was credited with being the savior of the expedition. The people of Cedar City continued their work from January through July and in September of 1898, the building, now known as Old Main, was completed. The additional financial resources needed to finish the first campus building came about due to the willingness of key leaders in Cedar City to mortgage their property.

Each of the periods of history of the school has been marked by significant accomplishments and growth. The Branch Normal School became Branch Agriculture College in 1913 and remained so until 1953. From 1953 to 1969 the College of Southern Utah fulfilled its role as a community college for the region. In 1969 it became Southern Utah State College and in 1991 the State Board of Regents approved university status and the College was renamed Southern Utah University. SUU began offering its first graduate programs shortly thereafter.

Today the campus comprises 133 acres, landscaped with fountains, tall spruce and pine trees, plazas, latticed walkways and expansive lawns. Beyond campus, the University owns and operates a 1,032-acre farm in western Cedar Valley and a 2,629-acre ranch in Cedar Canyon. The ranch includes a Mountain Center for executive leadership and continuing education programs.

The University’s Ashcroft Observatory is located outside the lighted neighborhoods of Cedar City for better celestial viewing opportunities. Because of their proximity and grandeur, Zion National Park and Cedar Breaks National Monument are claimed by students as part of the campus. Indeed, geological and life science field trips take advantage of these national treasures. The Bryce Canyon and Grand Canyon National Parks lie close by for easy touring. The University has carefully cultivated numerous partnerships with the Parks in an effort to integrate its unique location with its academic programs.

Utah System of Higher Education (USHE)

The State Board of Regents was created in 1969 to govern the Utah System of Higher Education, which consists of Utah’s eight public colleges and universities. The Board is comprised of 19 citizens—16 appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a student currently enrolled at a Utah institution, and three non-voting members (2 members of the State Board of Education, and 1 member of the Utah College of
Applied Technology Board of Trustees). The Board of Regents is responsible for statewide planning of higher education, appointment and evaluation of institutional presidents, approval of academic program offerings, and submitting a unified budget to the Governor and Legislature.

The Regents meet several times each year to consider new academic programs, review existing programs, and manage the capital growth and facilities of the campuses and the system of higher education in Utah. The state Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) manages and operates the planning, policies, procedures, facilities, and finance for a system that encompasses over 170,000 students. Detailed policies and procedures are in place for securing approval of academic programs, reviewing existing programs and developing budgets for each of the campuses.

II. INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

SUU COLLEGES & SCHOOLS

Through its 114-year history, Southern Utah University has evolved from a teacher training institution to a comprehensive regional university. Most recently, it was designated the state’s Liberal Arts and Sciences University by the Board of Regents. The University’s scope and scale continues to focus on providing students a personalized learning environment through planned growth of its enrollment and academic offerings. Strategic additions of professional graduate programs have been made at SUU since it became a university in 1991 in accounting, business administration, education, arts administration, communication, and public administration.

Fall 2010 full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment was 6,609 with 229 full-time faculty dedicated to helping students fulfill the University motto of “learning lives forever.” Operating on a semester system, SUU’s colleges and schools offer the programs of study and support areas listed below, as of fall 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges/Schools</th>
<th>Departments, Programs, Centers, Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Business</td>
<td>Accounting, Economics &amp; Finance, Management/Marketing &amp; Hospitality, Military Science Master of Business Administration, and Master of Accountancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Continuing and Professional Studies</td>
<td>Online and Distance Education, Concurrent Enrollment, Community Education, English as a Second Language, K-12 Professional Development Programs</td>
</tr>
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<td>Departments, Programs, Centers, Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| College of Humanities and Social Sciences| Communication, English, Foreign Language & Philosophy, Psychology, History & Sociology, Political Science & Criminal Justice  
|                                          | Master of Public Administration, and Master of Professional Communication           |
| College of Performing and Visual Arts    | Art & Design, Music, Theatre Arts & Dance,  
|                                          | Center for Shakespeare Studies, Utah Center for Arts Administration                |
|                                          | Master of Fine Arts in Arts Administration                                          |
| Library                                  | School Library Media Program  
|                                          | Information Literacy Classes  
|                                          | Library Services & Research Support (students, faculty, staff)  
|                                          | Special Collections  
|                                          | SUU Press  
|                                          | Archives                                                                       |
| College of Science and Engineering       | Agriculture and Nutrition Science, Biology, Integrated Engineering, Mathematics, Nursing, Physical Science (Chemistry, Physics and Geosciences), and the School of Computing and Technology (Department of Computer Science and Information Systems and Department of Engineering Technology and Construction Management) |
| University College                       | Academic and Career Advising Center, Tutoring Center, Testing Center, Academic and Career Development Center, Community Engagement Center, Creative and Innovative Engagement Center, Sargon Heinrich Global Engagement Center, Leadership Engagement Center, Outdoor Engagement Center, Convocations, Employer Relations, First-Year Programs, Career and Professional Development |

**ACCREDITATION**

The University is a fully accredited member of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Many of Southern Utah University’s undergraduate and graduate programs have special accreditation or endorsement from the following organizations:

- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)
- American Chemical Society (ACS)
- Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business-International (AACSB)
- Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
CENTERS
SUU hosts a number of unique academic and applied research and service Centers on its campus. These Centers support a wide variety of academic programs and administrative activities related to SUU’s mission.

- Beverley Taylor Sorenson Center for Innovative Education
- Center of Excellence for Teaching and Learning
- Center for Shakespeare Studies
- Hispanic Center for Academic Excellence
- Michael O. Leavitt Center for Politics & Public Service
- Sargon Heinrich Global Engagement Center
- Utah Center for Arts Administration
- Harry Reid Center for Outdoor Engagement
- Grace A. Tanner Center for Human Values
- Speech and Presentation Center
- Center for Sustainability
- Small Business Development Center
- Hospitality Research Center
- Center for Community Engagement
- Center for Leadership Engagement
- Center for Innovation & Creativity

In addition, SUU also maintains an undergraduate research and scholar program (UGRASP).

III. PREFACE

A. Institutional changes since last report

Since the 2008 Interim Report SUU has undergone several changes designed to build upon its community service heritage and commitment to providing students with a personalized learning experience. The arrival of Dr. Bradley Cook in 2009, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, ushered in a campus-wide process of self-assessment and a measured examination of the academic goals and aspirations of SUU. The campus became engaged in the development and implementation of an academic strategic plan dubbed the “Academic Roadmap – 2010-13.”

Balanced Scorecard

Work on the new academic strategic plan began as part of the welcome and orientation week for faculty and staff in August 2009. After a series of campus fact-finding forums, the Academic Planning Steering
Committee was formed to help shape and craft SUU’s academic roadmap for the near future. The committee, comprised of faculty, students and staff, was chaired by the President of the Faculty Senate and the Associate Provost. Working closely with the Provost, the committee gathered input from faculty, departments, colleges, administrative units, and the community. A website was created to share the progress of the development of the Academic Roadmap with the campus and community.

The scope of the planning process included looking at the mission and vision of SUU, engaging in a SWOT analysis, creating a set of six major strategic initiatives and thirty organizational objectives. The plan was framed by four elements of a balanced scorecard: Academic Excellence and Resources, Student Success and Engagement, Organizational Effectiveness, and Faculty and Staff Development. An overview of the plan is available at http://www.suu.edu/academics/provost/roadmap/. Detailed planning documents are also publically available: http://www.suu.edu/academics/provost/apsc.html.

FIGURE 1. SUU BALANCED SCORECARD – Academic Roadmap 2010-13

Academic Roadmap Initiatives

1. New Peer Group

As a result of the planning process, a new University peer group was developed in cooperation with the Board of Regents and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. SUU’s previous peer group was not comparable in several key areas: enrollment, number of academic programs, degrees offered, type of university, geographic location, and the number and type of graduate programs offered. The new peer group includes schools with a greater focus on undergraduate education and an emphasis on a strong set of liberal arts and sciences programs.
OLD PEER GROUP
Boise State University
California State University at Dominguez Hills
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Indiana University/Purdue University at Fort Wayne
University of North Florida
University of Northern Iowa
University of Wisconsin at Whitewater
Western Carolina University
Western Washington University
Youngstown State University

NEW PEER GROUP AS OF 2010
State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo
Austin Peay State University
Truman State University
Eastern Connecticut State University
Columbus State University
Georgia College & State University
Western Carolina University
Christopher Newport University
Southern Oregon University
Sonoma State University

2. Reorganization
In the process of assessing the academic program organization it was determined that greater efficiencies and economies of scale could be realized by merging the College of Science and the College of Computing, Integrated Engineering, and Technology. The new College of Science and Engineering merger was completed effective July 2011.

FIGURE 2. Organizational Chart for the College of Science and Engineering
3. Experiential Education Program (EEP)

One of the outcomes of the academic strategic plan was the creation of a University requirement that students complete three credits in experiential education course work. This requirement, unique to the universities and colleges in Utah, will allow students to take an active role in creating a learning experience to enhance their major or explore new areas. Five campus engagement centers were created to assist students with developing, completing, and then reflecting on an educational activity designed to broaden their experience as a SUU student (Community, Creativity & Innovation, Global, Leadership, and Outdoor). The EEP is supported through three new class offerings: UNIV 1010 – Intro to Experiential Education, UNIV 3925 – Experiential Education Proposal, and UNIV 4925 – Reflection and Synthesis. The new requirement was developed by a faculty task force and was approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in December, 2010. The EEP courses are being offered fall of 2011 for the first time.

4. New Academic Programs & Distinctions

The Academic Roadmap provided another mechanism to assess the potential for new programs designed to more effectively support the revised academic mission and goals. Out of this planning process six new academic programs and three new centers were created starting in 2010 (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1 – New Programs and Centers 2009 to 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Museum Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shakespeare Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainability Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women and Gender Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for Innovative Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for Hospitality Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Shakespeare Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experiential Education Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to these new programs and centers, a new University College (UC) was created. The UC was formed through the re-organization of a number of separate academic and administrative areas dedicated to advising, career development, tutoring, honors, and first-year experience courses. The new UC, with its own dean, provides a much needed coordinating entity for those students yet to decide on a major. The UC will also house the five new centers created to support the Experiential Education Program (EEP).

In 2010 the University was also successful in its quest to achieve the Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement designation. The University's active Service and Learning Center, and its participation in initiatives such as the rural health program and arts education in the K-12 schools, were cited as examples of the campus commitment to community engagement.

5. Organizational Efficiencies

The Academic Roadmap also called for assessing ways the University could operate more efficiently. Using information gathered from student surveys, four important areas of improvement were identified to help students more effectively navigate the university experience: advising, course and program selection, career planning, and learning management system improvements.

To address the first area, the University acquired DegreeWorks software which went “live” the first week in September 2011. This product assists students, in cooperation with advisors, in developing viable plans for completing course work in a timely manner.

The second product purchased was an e-catalog software system called Acalog. Beginning in the 2012-13 academic year students will be able to access the catalog online. In addition, the cumbersome process of managing catalog content at the department and college level will be streamlined by a new online editing, approval and content management system.

Thirdly, Optimal Resume software will be made available (at no cost) to all SUU students (and alumni) to develop customizable e-portfolios in the 2011-12 academic year. E-portfolios will be integrated into the Experiential Education Program courses as well as other courses across the University. Some of the many features of the software include the user’s ability to create multiple websites and resumes to assist with career development and employment.

Lastly, the Utah System of Higher Education began a process of migrating to a new learning management system entitled Canvas on each campus. Canvas will be replacing Blackboard, our current learning management system, in the fall of 2011. The new software offers a much improved system for accessing course content using technology as a complement to face-to-face or hybrid classes, or for distance education.

B. Response to Topics Previously Requested by the Commission

SUU’s accreditation was reaffirmed in a letter dated February 9, 2009 from President Sandra Elman based on the Fall 2008 Regular Interim Report submitted by Southern Utah University. However, a progress report was requested by October 15, 2010 addressing three areas for improvement cited by NWCCU. A report was submitted to the Commission that offered an explanation of how SUU has addressed the three recommendations below.
1. Student learning outcomes listed in the assessment reports ranged from the very clear and specific to the highly abstract and general. Attention should be given by the dean and/or the Assessment and IR Committee to working with departments in analyzing student learning outcomes to ensure their clarity and assess ability. These efforts should also incorporate student support services areas (Policy 2.2).

2. Standard Two, in its section on assessment, calls for evidence that assessment activities lead to the improvement of teaching and learning. Progress has been made in three areas: implementation of program review, developing student learning outcomes and their measures, and articulation of general education outcomes and their inclusion in course syllabi. However, more work needs to be done to separate and then individually address the different educational programs. The University has yet to fully implement the final two stages of a full assessment program - data summarization and analysis, and evidence that the analysis is used for program improvement (Policy 2.2).

3. While a systematic program of academic and educational program advisement is provided, the current model of college-based professional advisors has resulted in unevenness of advising loads that is dependent upon new resources for balancing. The academic advising model needs monitoring to assure balanced access and quality of information (Standard 3.D.10).

The Commission response in February 2011 to the SUU Interim Report was as follows:

The Commission has determined that some progress has been made regarding Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Fall 2008 Regular Interim Evaluation Report. In accepting the progress report, however, the Commission requests the University submit an addendum to the institution’s Fall 2012 Year Three Self-Evaluation Report and to explicitly explain the incorporation of student learning outcomes into student support service areas.

SUU has already taken steps to address this issue raised by the Commission by creating a new position in Student Services specifically charged with responsibility for policy, planning, assessment, and accountability. This new hire has been tasked to specifically develop learning outcomes for the student services area in cooperation with StudentVoice, a nationally recognized assessment resource.

IV. CHAPTER ONE: Standard 1.A.

1.A. Standard One – Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

a. Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3

SUU, one of eight colleges and universities in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE), is authorized to grant associate, bachelor, and master degrees. The UtahHigherEd 2020 Plan notes:
As the state’s designated liberal arts and sciences university, Southern Utah University (SUU) provides a broad-based, engaged college experience for students of high academic achievement, stressing experiential, integrative and personalized learning in a residential setting. The University serves the entire state while maintaining varied programs to meet unique regional needs and concerns.

Regents will continue to value quality education at SUU within its distinctive mission over dramatic enrollment growth; thus funding for SUU should be mission focused in assuring high quality graduates and engaged citizens.

A moderate growth rate is expected to be based on SUU maintaining its present share of the Utah population. As a quality liberal arts and sciences university, SUU will continue to be a prime destination for students interested in educational experiences typical of a private university with the affordability of a public higher educational institution with a particular focus on high quality programs in the arts, sciences, pre-professional, professional and graduate fields. [p. 132, 2020 Plan]


1.A.1
The institution has a widely published mission statement—approved by its governing board—that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.

Vision Statement
Southern Utah University will be nationally recognized as a premier institution of learning known for enabling its students to honor thought in all its finest forms, achieve excellence in their chosen field, and create positive change in the world.

Mission Statement
Southern Utah University, as our founders envisioned, is a vibrant teaching and learning community inspired by its unique natural surroundings. As Utah’s designated public liberal arts and sciences university, students engage in a personalized and rigorous experiential education empowering them to be productive citizens, socially responsible leaders, high achievers and lifelong learners.

In order to fulfill its mission SUU will:
- Emphasize excellence in learning designed to foster critical thinking, effective communication, lifelong intellectual curiosity, global awareness, personal responsibility, and integrity
- Offer educational experiences typical of private universities with the affordability of public higher education
- Provide outstanding programs of study in the arts and sciences, pre-professional, professional, and graduate studies
- Contribute to state, regional, and community needs as a social, cultural, and economic catalyst
- Harness and integrate our unique geographic location in the SUU educational experience

Interpretation of Vision and Mission Fulfillment
The SUU mission statement, which was revised in June 2011, pays homage to the unique founding of the school and the commitment of the community in supporting higher education in Cedar City and southern Utah. Southern Utah University, as noted in the history section of this report, owes its founding to the willingness of the people of Cedar City to give of their time, effort, and financial resources in support of what was originally the Branch Normal School in 1897.
**Vision**

The vision for SUU is directed beyond southern Utah and articulates its desire to be recognized nationally for its distinctive quality programs. In the process of developing this vision many hours were spent in detailed discussion with members of the campus and community. This vision represents the collective aspirations of the faculty, staff, and students of SUU and is in concert with the community and the state’s desire for SUU to advance as an institution of higher learning. As is customary in the process of creating a vision statement, each word carries with it explicit and implicit meaning. For example, the phrase “premier institution” is used to articulate the desire to be perceived as a distinctive public liberal arts university among the new peer set adopted in 2010.

When SUU is compared to its new peer set there are several key areas for potential growth and development. For example, SUU’s new peer set includes schools that invest significantly more per student in instructional resources. Key areas such as scholarship support, endowments, and giving per alumni are at higher levels among the new peer set. The vision statement is also directing institutional time and resources toward pursuing membership in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), as well as seeking membership in Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Beta Kappa. The underlying assumption in pursuing these initiatives is that highly regarded institutions meet the criteria associated with these entities.

**Mission**

The revised mission statement articulates the importance of our founding and the commitment to creating and sustaining an educational environment centered on teaching and learning. SUU operationalizes these words through an organizational culture that values, rewards, and consistently communicates the importance of faculty and student interaction.

The recent designation of SUU as Utah’s liberal arts and sciences university strategically shifts it away from the 2005 mission which classified it as a “comprehensive, regional institution offering graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and technical programs” [“Our Mission,” p. 8, SUU General Catalog 2011-12]. The new designation allows SUU to direct its decision making processes and focus its priorities on activities and programs that better differentiate itself from the other colleges and universities in Utah.

SUU, in part because of its size, has prided itself on the meaningful student engagement that occurs outside the classroom. The new statement stresses a personalized and experiential educational environment, which is designed to produce high achieving, productive, and responsible citizens. The mission statement concludes by stressing a long time value held at SUU about the importance of lifelong learning. The concept of lifelong learning carries with it an implied commitment to help our students graduate with the skills to sustain a process of intellectual discovery and development.

In order to fulfill the mission SUU has also articulated five mission mandates. Each of these mandates relates to the Core Themes and are designed to help shape the planning goals and objectives of SUU. The first mandate speaks to academic excellence and six learning outcomes. Second, SUU will make affordability an important part of our decision making process. Third, SUU will continue to offer a comprehensive array of academic programs to support the diverse needs of the citizens of Utah and the region. Fourth, SUU will contribute to the quality of life and economic and cultural development of Utah and the region. Lastly, SUU’s unique location gives it the opportunity to enhance a student’s educational experience at the school. The relationship of the mission to these mandates, and the description of how each mandate will be fulfilled, is shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5.
Standard 1.A.2
The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

FIGURE 3. SUU ACADEMIC STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERVIEW

VISION STATEMENT
... nationally recognized premier institution... honoring thought... students achieve excellence in their field and create positive change in the world.

MISSION STATEMENT
... vibrant teaching and learning community inspired by unique natural surroundings... liberal arts and sciences university... personalized and experiential education... high achieving lifelong learners

CORE THEMES
1. Academic Excellence
2. Involvement and Personal Growth
3. Community and Social Responsibility

BALANCED SCORECARD
- Academic Excellence
- Faculty & Staff Development
- Student Success & Engagement
- Organizational Effectiveness
VISION STATEMENT
Southern Utah University will be nationally recognized as a premier institution of learning known for enabling its students to honor thought in all its finest forms, achieve excellence in their chosen field, and create positive change in the world.

MISSION STATEMENT
Southern Utah University, as our founders envisioned, is a vibrant teaching and learning community inspired by its unique natural surroundings. As Utah’s designated public liberal arts and sciences university, students engage in a personalized and rigorous experiential education empowering them to be productive citizens, socially responsible leaders, high achievers and lifelong learners. In order to fulfill its mission SUU will:

1. Emphasize excellence in learning designed to foster critical thinking, effective communication, lifelong intellectual curiosity, global awareness, personal responsibility, and integrity
2. Offer educational experiences typical of private universities with the affordability of public higher education
3. Provide outstanding programs of study in the arts and sciences, pre-professional, professional, and graduate studies
4. Contribute to state, regional, and community needs as a social, cultural, and economic catalyst
5. Harness and integrate our unique geographic location in the SUU educational experience

VISION & MISSION FULFILLMENT
SUU’s reputation for quality and its stature grows as the state’s designated liberal arts and sciences university. Applications increase from high-achieving students from around the state and region. Its distinctive experiential education programs give graduates of SUU a competitive edge in their career development and pursuit of further education. Mission fulfillment further includes:

1. Designing and implementing a learning outcome assessment system to track key performance indicators. Results are used to help adapt and adjust course and program offerings at SUU. A new faculty center for teaching and learning is created to assist with faculty development.
2. Wisely manage resources so that the total costs to attend SUU align with pricing of USHE schools and with the SUU peer set.
3. Ongoing and rigorous academic and operational program assessment systems are in place. Colleges and departments meet or exceed performance expectations. Improvement plans are implemented as necessary.
4. Producing annual institutional activity reports that document SUU’s contributions to the social, cultural, and economic growth of southern Utah.
5. Every college offers at least one academic program or annual event designed to highlight our unique location.
FIGURE 5. Vision, Mission, Core Themes, and Balanced Scorecard

**VISION STATEMENT**
Southern Utah University will be nationally recognized as a premier institution of learning known for enabling its students to honor thought in all its finest forms, achieve excellence in their chosen field, and create positive change in the world.

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4. Contribute to state, regional, and community needs as a social, cultural, and economic catalyst
5. Harness and integrate our unique geographic location in the SUU educational experience

**CORE THEMES**

**Academic Excellence**
With superior teaching and engaged learning as its foundation, academic excellence is the hallmark of Southern Utah University. Students are expected to meet the challenges of rigorous programs of study offered at SUU. Unique experiential education programs and dedicated faculty promote both critical and creative thinking and scholarly activity in a supportive learning environment. SUU is committed to sustaining an academic community that encourages students to develop their breadth and depth as scholars and global citizens. SUU supports faculty and staff development designed to respond to the changing demands of higher education and the needs of its students. Assessment of learning outcomes and continual improvement are key elements of the educational experience at SUU.

**Involvement and Personal Growth**
Southern Utah University encourages student growth and development by providing opportunities and programs designed to broaden social and cultural perspectives through campus and community service, and outdoor, creative, and global engagement activities. The University affirms that active participation in well-designed experience-based programs provides a holistic educational experience and helps prepare students to become engaged members of society. SUU is committed to helping students become confident, creative, and adaptive lifelong learners known for their service to the community.

**Community and Social Responsibility**
Essential to the educational process is a sense of an academic community wherein collaboration, diversity, respect for all people, concern for the environment, civility, and shared governance are cultivated. SUU encourages the discussion and exploration of differing views while recognizing the cherished individual freedom to reach one’s own conclusions. Developing students into productive responsible citizens, both locally and globally, involves the thoughtful exploration and application of ethics and values and the acknowledgment of the responsibilities one has as a contributing citizen of the world.

**BALANCED SCORE CARD & STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**
1. To have SUU recognized nationally for its high quality and distinctive academic programs
   1.1 Pursue and support accreditation for academic programs
   1.2 Enhance international partnerships and global awareness
   1.3 Increase academic standards and rigor
   1.4 Qualify for institutional membership in Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi
   1.5 Coordinate efforts through the VP for University Relations to promote SUU’s academic excellence

2. Secure Resources for the Academic Roadmap
   2.1 Create multi-year tuition plan that will support academic excellence and student engagement
   2.2 Create multi-year plan for enhancing faculty and staff compensation
   2.3 Develop budget plans to better support undergraduate and graduate programs
   2.4 Identify viability of new academic programs and quality initiatives
   2.5 Evaluate scholarships, waivers, student employment, and financial aid support system
   2.6 Coordinate efforts through the VP for Institutional Advancement to secure resources to support academic initiatives

3. Develop High Impact Educational Programs and Practices
   3.1 Develop the Experiential Education Program requirements (EEP)
   3.2 Develop interdisciplinary programs
   3.3 Enhance Honors Program
   3.4 Assess and implement changes to improve the General Education curriculum and First-year Program

4. Increase Student Success and Engagement
   4.1 Develop and implement a master plan for student success initiatives and enrollment management
   4.2 Enhance the quality and consistency of academic advising
   4.3 Increase support for students seeking graduate school and career counseling
   4.4 Create a campus atmosphere nurturing and promoting intellectual stimulation
   4.5 Increase student involvement and place attachment

5. Achieve Organizational Efficiencies
   5.1 Create a University College
   5.2 Regularly assess alignment of colleges and academic programs
   5.3 Create an Office of Institutional Research
   5.4 Develop and implement plans to enhance Library holdings and services
   5.5 Continue to ensure the uniformity of high quality service in key student support areas on campus
   5.6 Ensure SUU is employing effective technology in teaching and learning environments
   5.7 Develop institutional plan and support online and distance education

6. Faculty Excellence and Development
   6.1 Hire and retain outstanding faculty and staff to support mission and academic strategic goals
   6.2 Review and address faculty workload issues
   6.3 Create Center of Excellence for Teaching and Learning (CETL)
   6.4 Support Faculty Scholarly, Creative, and Research Grants

**STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT**

**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**FACULTY & STAFF DEVELOPMENT**
Standard 1.B.1. – Core Themes

1.B.1
The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.

Academic Excellence – Core Theme 1:
With superior teaching and engaged learning as its foundation, academic excellence is the hallmark of Southern Utah University. Students are expected to meet the challenges of rigorous programs of study offered at SUU. Unique experiential education programs and dedicated faculty promote both critical and creative thinking and scholarly activity in a supportive learning environment. SUU is committed to sustaining an academic community that encourages students to develop their breadth and depth as scholars and global citizens. SUU supports faculty and staff development designed to respond to the changing demands of higher education and the needs of its students. Assessment of learning outcomes and continual improvement are key elements of the educational experience at SUU.

Manifestation of Vision and Mission in Core Theme 1 – Academic Excellence
The new SUU vision statement stresses achieving recognition as a “premier institution” focused on student “excellence” while reinforcing key concepts such as rigor and high achievement as an expected outcome of a SUU education. The aspiration for national recognition helps drive decisions to put in place distinctive quality programs, to support academic and scholarly achievement, and to set clear priorities (see Table 1). The combination of seeking national recognition and the mission focus on the University’s unique geographic location helps drive decisions on how financial and human resources are allocated. For example, SUU is continuing to develop and enhance its unique partnerships with the national parks in the region and the West.

The mission and this theme of excellence also references experiential education and its importance in an SUU education. The strategic focus on the experiential experience is centered on the student and helps support SUU students to “honor thought” and to be empowered toward being “productive citizens, socially responsible leaders, high achievers and lifelong learners.” For example, the five Engagement Centers (Community, Global, Outdoor, Leadership, and Creative and Innovative) have been created to support the experiential education program in order to facilitate students being able to achieve this important graduation requirement.

Core Theme 1 also develops the vision and mission in more detail by articulating the kind of learning environment that would normally be associated with the University. SUU has articulated goals to maintain and develop rigorous academic programs while actively promoting competencies in essential areas such as critical and creative thinking. In addition, by stressing breadth and depth, SUU is making a statement about expectations related to its general education program. Lastly, by referencing continuous improvement and assessment, SUU is holding itself responsible to ensure it has systems and processes in place to effectively achieve these important outcomes. A specific example of how SUU is responding to this theme can be seen through the creation and support of a new Center of Excellence for Teaching and Learning to support faculty in the classroom.
Involvement and Personal Growth – Core Theme 2:
Southern Utah University encourages student growth and development by providing opportunities and programs designed to broaden social and cultural perspectives through campus and community service, and outdoor, creative, and global engagement activities. The University affirms that active participation in well-designed experience-based programs provides a holistic educational experience and helps prepare students to become engaged members of society. SUU is committed to helping students become confident, creative, and adaptive lifelong learners known for their service to the community.

Manifestation of Vision and Mission in Core Theme 2 – Involvement and Personal Growth
This theme further builds upon the unique experiential education program SUU has designed and staffed through its five engagement centers. Goals and outcomes for experiential education have been designed to help students develop independent thinking and initiative they can transfer to their employment or education beyond SUU.

Community and Social Responsibility – Core Theme 3:
Essential to the educational process is an academic community wherein collaboration, diversity, respect for all people, concern for the environment, civility, and shared governance are cultivated. SUU encourages the discussion and exploration of differing views while recognizing the cherished individual freedom to reach one’s own conclusions. Developing students into productive responsible citizens, both locally and globally, involves the thoughtful exploration and application of ethics and values and the acknowledgment of the responsibilities one has as a contributing citizen of the world.

Manifestation of Vision and Mission in Core Theme 3 – Community and Social Responsibility
The third theme addresses the institutional commitment of the faculty, staff, students, and trustees to the larger community served by SUU. Sustaining and enhancing a campus community that exhibits the attributes noted in theme 3 drives specific planning goals and objectives such as supporting academic freedom, increasing diversity, and expanding global engagement. Shared governance extends beyond the faculty, administration and trustees. For example, staff and students are regularly included on committees or other work groups empowered to make recommendations or decisions that affect the campus and community. In addition, this theme speaks to the importance of ethics and values to the institution and to building a culture that makes personal responsibility an important part of the SUU campus community.

Standard 1. B.2 Goals and Objectives of Core Themes

1. B.2
The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.

The three core themes are integrated into the Academic Roadmap plan. Here is a summary of the six strategic initiatives of the plan and the resulting 30 objectives in support of the core themes. Each objective includes several action items. The detailed breakdown of the plan is available for review at http://www.suu.edu/academics/provost/apsc.html.
Academic Roadmap 2010-13 – Strategic Initiatives, Organizational Objectives, and Goals

CORE THEME 1 – ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

I. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE & RESOURCES STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To have SUU recognized nationally for its high quality and distinctive academic programs
   1.1 Pursue and support accreditation for academic programs
   1.2 Enhance international partnerships and global awareness
   1.3 Increase academic standards and rigor
   1.4 Qualify for institutional membership in Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi
   1.5 Coordinate efforts through the VP for University Relations to promote SUU’s academic excellence

2. Secure Resources for the Academic Roadmap
   2.1 Create multi-year tuition plan that will support academic excellence and student engagement
   2.2 Create multi-year plan for enhancing faculty and staff compensation
   2.3 Develop budget plans to better support undergraduate and graduate programs
   2.4 Identify viability of new academic programs and quality initiatives
   2.5 Evaluate scholarships, waivers, student employment, and financial aid support system
   2.6 Coordinate efforts through the VP for Institutional Advancement to secure resources to support academic initiatives

CORE THEME 2 - INVOLVEMENT & PERSONAL GROWTH

II. STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

3. Develop High Impact Educational Programs and Practices
   3.1 Develop the Experiential Education Program requirements (EEP)
   3.2 Develop interdisciplinary programs
   3.3 Enhance Honors Program
   3.4 Assess and implement changes to improve the General Education curriculum and First-year Program

4. Increase Student Success and Engagement
   4.1 Develop and implement a master plan for student success initiatives and enrollment management
   4.2 Enhance the quality and consistency of academic advising
   4.3 Increase support for students seeking graduate school and career counseling
   4.4 Create a campus atmosphere nurturing and promoting intellectual stimulation
   4.5 Increase student involvement and place attachment

CORE THEMES 1, 2 AND 3

III. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

5. Achieve Organizational Efficiencies
   5.1 Create a University College
   5.2 Regularly assess alignment of colleges and academic programs
   5.3 Create an Office of Institutional Research
   5.4 Develop and implement plans to enhance Library holdings and services
   5.5 Continue to ensure the uniformity of high quality service in key student support areas on campus
   5.6 Ensure SUU is employing effective technology in teaching and learning environments
   5.7 Develop institutional plan and support online and distance education

CORE THEMES 1, 2 AND 3

IV. FACULTY & STAFF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

6. Faculty Excellence and Development
   6.1 Hire and retain outstanding faculty and staff to support mission and academic strategic goals
   6.2 Review and address faculty workload issues
   6.3 Create Center of Excellence for Teaching and Learning (CETL)
   6.4 Support Faculty Scholarly, Creative, and Research Grants
V. SUMMARY

Southern Utah University is actively engaged in realizing its new mission, vision, and core themes through its Academic Roadmap 2010-2013. The implementation of the plan has led to SUU reorganizing the alignment of selected academic programs and colleges. New majors, minors and academic centers have been created to support the goals and objectives inherent in the plan. Significant new resources have been directed toward hiring faculty and support staff to strengthen academic programs and bolster areas such as academic advising and student support services. Additional focus has been given to faculty development through financial support for scholarship, presentations, performances and publishing. The creation and staffing of a new center for teaching and learning is also helping to elevate the importance of great teaching and scholarship on campus.

The creation of an experiential education requirement (the EEP or Experiential Education Program) and the staffing of five new engagement centers (Community, Global, Outdoor, Leadership, and Creative and Innovative) is a priority activity at Southern Utah University as it moves into the second decade of the 21st Century. Developing and implementing this new program helped engage the campus community in an ongoing dialog about the value of a SUU education. The assessment of the impact of the experiential education program will also help focus the University on developing outcomes that can be measured over time.

The new experiential education requirement is also helping to expand the discussion about the General Education program at SUU. The nature of the relationship of general education requirements and the experiential education program is still being explored. The integration of experiential education into the curriculum has also strengthened the ties between academic and student services. Learning communities, educational programming, systems of student accountability rooted in education and collaboration between student services professionals and experiential center directors, enhance the opportunities for non-academic programs and services to “bring to life the lessons of the classroom.”

The systems to effectively integrate experiential education in all its forms, general education, and the knowledge area in a student’s major into a cohesive education that promotes lifelong learning is still a work in progress. Developing an integrated educational system is serving as a catalyst for discussion and academic planning across campus. In addition, the accepted state-wide articulation and transferability of GE classes in Utah is presenting challenges when it comes to creating a clear path through course work that will be unique to SUU, and at the same time, will not add time to graduation.

Lastly, the reaccreditation process and the new NWCCU standards articulated for colleges and universities are helping to shape SUU’s strategic planning process. Significant effort has been expended to develop the current academic plans of the University. The commitment and follow through associated with implementing the plan has helped focus attention on building systems and processes in support of assessment and clear outcomes. New initiatives have been implemented to better support academic advising (DegreeWorks) and make the process of engaging the colleges and degree programs through its catalog more effective and efficient (new Acalog e-catalog). The next step is to develop an outcomes assessment system that can be used throughout the institution. However, much is to be done over the next three to five years to develop and embed cooperation and collaboration across campus.