

# **Year One Self-Evaluation Report**

Snow College

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on College and Universities

September 6, 2011

# Table of Contents

|                                                                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Institutional Overview                                                               | 1  |
| Preface                                                                              | 3  |
| Brief Update on Institutional Changes since Snow College's Last Report               | 3  |
| Response to Topics Previously Requested by the Commission                            | 4  |
| Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations                                               | 5  |
| a) Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3                             | 5  |
| b) Standard 1.A <i>Mission</i>                                                       | 5  |
| Snow College's Mission Statement                                                     | 6  |
| Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment                                                | 7  |
| Articulation of an Acceptable Threshold, Extent,<br>or Degree of Mission Fulfillment | 7  |
| c) Standard 1.B <i>Core Themes</i>                                                   | 8  |
| Core Theme One                                                                       | 8  |
| Core Theme Two                                                                       | 11 |
| Core Theme Three                                                                     | 13 |
| Conclusion                                                                           | 15 |
| Appendix                                                                             | 16 |

# **Standard One Self-Evaluation Report**

**Snow College**

**September 6, 2011**

## **Institutional Overview**

Snow College, founded in 1888 in Ephraim, Utah, is one of the oldest two-year state colleges in the West. It was born as a residential academy – providing teaching and learning opportunities tailored to the critically important formative years of early adult and adult learning. Today the College is a residential junior college – with dedicated and associated community college commitments of service to the residents of its six-county primary service region of central Utah. The composition of the student body is approximately 40 percent from the six-county area, another 40 percent from elsewhere in Utah, and 20 percent from other states and international locations.

Snow College is one of eight public colleges and universities in the Utah System of Higher Education governed by a nineteen-member Utah State Board of Regents appointed by the Governor. Each of the eight institutions also has a ten-member board of trustees, with selected authority, which is appointed by the Governor.

Snow College offers a two-year, parallel university experience for freshmen and sophomore students. Nearly 79 percent of all Snow College students transfer to a four-year institution following their studies at the College.

The College has also offered career and technical courses throughout its 123 year history. In 1998, the Utah State Legislature merged the former Sevier Valley Applied Technology Center, located in Richfield, Utah, with Snow College. The Richfield campus adds an array of programs in career and technical education and a growing number of academic courses to complement the offerings on the Ephraim campus. Students enrolled at the College can complete associate degree programs in the arts, science, applied science, business, and pre-engineering, or earn short-term certificates. Most course offerings are delivered live in a face-to-face format, frequently with technology enhancement, with some courses broadcast from one campus to another. A small but growing number of course offerings are delivered online.

The College serves as the intellectual, artistic, musical, educational, and sports center of central Utah and also provides unique programs for a two-year college, including a

collaboration with The Julliard School in New York City and a one-of-a-kind degree in historic traditional building skills. Snow College also holds the status of being one of a very small number of two-year colleges in the country to be accredited by the National Association for Schools of Theatre, the National Association of Schools of Music, and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs.

The rural area of Utah served by Snow College has been among the hardest hit by the current economic downturn. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau reports that Utah ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation for personal income per capita. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis shows the per capita income of the College's six-county primary service area falls well below the Utah state average. In Sanpete County, the home county of the College, the poverty rate is around 13.4%, one of the highest rates in the State (Utah Department of Workforce Services). Unemployment in these six counties also averages 1.5% higher than the State level. More than 75% of the Snow College student population receives some form of financial aid. For fiscal year 2010, Snow College disbursed more than \$8.5 million in financial aid to needy students.

Since 2008, Snow College has faced considerable budget cuts, like most colleges nationwide. The College has responded with several budget reductions as the Utah Legislature cut Snow College's appropriated budget by 17 percent or \$3.8 million over the last two years. The reduction for the current fiscal year is an additional 2.5 percent or \$516,400.

Despite the fiscal challenge to the State and the College, enrollments at Snow College have continued to grow. Over the last three years, enrollment growth at Snow College has amounted to 15 percent. The unduplicated head count enrollment for Fall Semester 2010 was 4,386 with a fulltime equivalent of 3,415. A small increase in enrollment is expected for Fall Semester 2011. Students also have access to Snow College programs through online distance education offerings. Snow College employs 122 fulltime faculty and 132 fulltime staff members to serve those students. In contrast to some larger urban institutions, Snow's rural location results in most faculty members being full time, allowing them to devote their full attention to instructing students.

Snow College is devoted to retaining the best of the past and to answering the demands of changing times. The College has a long history and well-established reputation of offering excellent quality education. As the student body grows, Snow College must stay innovative and proactive as it continues to find ways to offer new programs and services to benefit students and the local community. The goal is to continue to implement innovative strategies that allow the College to do more with less while ensuring that the students and communities succeed.

## **Preface**

### **Brief Update on Institutional Changes since Snow College's Last Report**

The last report submitted by Snow College to the Commission was October 2009. Since that date, the institution has continued to wrestle with the financial challenges described above. The College was able to hire six additional faculty members and several new adjunct instructors to accommodate enrollment growth prior to Fall Semester 2010, despite the budget cuts. The College employed a new Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Gary Smith, beginning August 2010.

Effective Fall Semester 2010, courses in the Building Construction and Construction Management (BCCM) program were no longer taught on the Richfield Campus. The instructor, who had been teaching in Richfield, was reassigned to teach BCCM courses for the College at the Central Utah Correctional Facility in Gunnison, Utah. BCCM courses continue to be taught at the Ephraim campus. The College also teaches culinary arts at the correctional facility. No degrees or credits are awarded for courses taken at the correctional facility, but inmates can receive certificates recognizing their accomplishments.

Several additional changes to instructional programs have occurred. Effective Fall Semester 2010, courses in the Automotive Technology program are no longer offered in Ephraim. They continue to be taught on the Richfield campus. The Art and Graphic Communications program was suspended effective Spring Semester 2011. Students who had been enrolled in the program were notified during Spring Semester 2010 and were assisted in completing the remaining courses in their program prior to its elimination. The Collision Repair and Refinishing Technology program and the Culinary Arts program were both suspended effective the end of spring semester this past year. The Drafting Technology program will be suspended at the end of the upcoming fall semester. Students who have been enrolled in those programs who have not yet finished their studies are being accommodated on an individual basis with signed memoranda of understandings with each one.

A significant change to the Ephraim physical plant occurred with the completion of the new Karen H. Huntsman Library. The beautiful new state-of-the-art facility opened on August 23, 2010. The former library was remodeled for use as classrooms with state-of-the-art technology. Presently, the College is constructing a new 400-bed student housing complex on the Ephraim campus, which will nearly double the number of its on-campus beds. The Richfield campus has seen significant remodeling within the last two

years to accommodate a growing nursing program and update instructional space for business and computer information systems.

During the May 2011 meeting of the Utah State Board of Regents, Snow College was approved to offer an Associate of Applied Science in General Technology as part of a statewide effort to award credit to students transferring from the Utah College of Applied Technology.

### **Response to Topics Previously Requested by the Commission**

During the fall of 2005, a Focused Interim Evaluation visit to Snow College occurred. Two recommendations were given to Snow:

- “The relationship between institutional assessment and institutional planning is still undeveloped. It is recommended that the College formalize and document this relationship.”
- “Snow College has developed a structure and baseline for implementing ongoing assessment. It is recommended that the College refine its methods and improve the quality of its performance measures.”

The College responded to the two recommendations when it submitted the Regular Interim Report in the fall of 2007. A visit followed by two persons from Northwest and two recommendations resulted:

- “It is recommended that Snow College provide for regular and systematic evaluation of part-time faculty performance to ensure teaching effectiveness.”
- “It is recommended that Snow College continue to focus on documenting how assessment data are formally reviewed and subsequently used in the planning and decision-making processes of the institution. Furthermore, end of program assessment, post-enrollment student satisfaction and loyalty, and post-completion employer satisfaction measures need to be formally documented and the institution needs to clearly demonstrate how these measures are used for program improvement.”

During the fall of 2009 the College submitted a Progress Report to the Commission wherein the two recommendations from 2007 were addressed. A letter from Dr. Sandra Elman dated February 12, 2010 stated the following: “The Commission was satisfied that progress had been made regarding Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Fall 2007 Regular Interim Evaluation Report.”

## Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

---

*The institution articulates its purpose in a mission statement, and identifies core themes that comprise essential elements of that mission. In an examination of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations, the institution defines the parameters for mission fulfillment. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.*

---

### **Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3**

#### *Requirement 2: Authority*

*“The institution is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.”*

#### *Requirement 3: Mission and Core Themes*

*“The institution’s mission and core themes are clearly defined and adopted by its governing board(s) consistent with its legal authorization, and are appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education. The institution’s purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees. The institution devotes all, or substantially all, of its resources to support its educational mission and core themes.”*

---

Snow College is one of eight institutions of higher education governed by the Utah State Board of Regents. The Utah Code, 53B-2-101, states the following about those eight institutions:

“(1) The following institutions of higher education are bodies politic and corporate with perpetual succession and with all rights, immunities, and franchises necessary to function as such.”

## **Standard 1.A Mission**

---

*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.*

---

“As established by the Utah State Board of Regents, Snow College is a comprehensive two-year community college with campuses in Ephraim and Richfield. Its mission is to transmit knowledge and skills through transfer education at the associate of arts and associate of science degree level along with offering associate of applied science degrees, career and technical education, customized training for employers, developmental education, and strong student services to support these functions. Transfer programs are intended to prepare graduates to begin upper-division work. Emphasis is placed on teaching, training, scholarly, professional, and creative achievement, and community service. The institution contributes to the quality of life and economic development of the community and the state. Student success is supported through developmental programs and services associated with a comprehensive community college.” (Taken from the 2011-2012 Snow College Catalog)

### **Snow College’s Mission Statement**

The Snow College mission statement is: **“Snow College continues a tradition of excellence, encourages a culture of innovation, and cultivates an atmosphere of engagement to advance students in the achievement of their educational goals.”**

The previous mission statement had been in place since the late 1980s. The process to create a new mission statement began on August 2, 2010, shortly after the arrival of Dr. Gary Smith as the new Vice President for Academic Affairs. The College created an Accreditation Steering Committee in late August composed of 18 individuals representing faculty, staff, students, and administration at the College. The committee members met several times during the fall of 2010. They created numerous drafts of a revised mission statement and core themes that the members shared with their own constituencies to obtain feedback. Several meetings involving instructional divisions, administrative departments, focus groups, and student leaders were to get ideas and reactions to the drafts of the mission revision and the new core themes. The Snow College Alumni Board was also consulted. Finally the Snow College Board of Trustees adopted the new mission statement on February 16, 2011.

The Board of Trustees also approved three Core Themes on that date. They are **Tradition of Excellence, Culture of Innovation, and Atmosphere of Engagement.**

---

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.*

---

### **Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment**

Inasmuch as the concept of interpreting mission fulfillment was new to Snow College, various approaches used by other institutions in the Northwest accreditation region were reviewed. A decision was made to evaluate mission fulfillment by assessing the extent to which the expectations of identified core theme objectives, and then core themes themselves, were being met. Snow College has identified 14 core theme objectives. Each objective has one to four key performance indicators (KPIs) that “define” the objective. Data will be collected for each KPI throughout the coming year and will be reviewed to help institution personnel evaluate the extent to which each core theme objective is being achieved. By judging the level of achievement of each core theme objective and then the core theme itself, a comprehensive picture of institutional achievement will emerge and will become apparent and will be used in assessing mission fulfillment. That assessment will focus on how well Snow College is helping to **“advance students in the achievement of their educational goals.”**

### **Articulation of an Acceptable Threshold, Extent, or Degree of Mission Fulfillment**

The process for determining an acceptable threshold for each core theme objective and degree of mission fulfillment will begin with the KPIs. For each KPI, information has been or will be collected and reviewed relative to current performance at the Institution. Then, a target performance level will be identified. Target performance levels will be based on (1) Snow’s own past performance or, (2) comparisons with other community colleges, or (3) goals that have been set. Following a specified period of time for assessment, e.g., one year, a review of current performance for each KPI will be considered. For each objective, it will be decided if performance “exceeds expectations,” “meets expectations,” or “does not meet expectations.” If performance is judged to exceed or meet expectations, the College will work to maintain that performance level, and may increase the target. If performance is judged to not meet expectations, a plan will be created or modified and implemented to effect improvement in the same.

Internal judgment about how well the College is fulfilling its mission will follow a four-step process of (1) reviewing the data collected for each KPI to see how close to the target current performance is, (2) reviewing the forgoing data to make a judgment about

each core theme objective relative to exceeds, meets, or does not meet expectations, (3) reviewing the forgoing information to make a judgment about each core theme relative to exceeds, meets, or does not meet expectations, and (4) reviewing the comprehensive picture of current performance at the College to make an evaluation about mission fulfillment. The administration, faculty, and staff of the College are committed to regularly scheduled reviews of performance and plans for each level of the Institution.

## **Standard 1.B Core Themes**

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

*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.*

### **Core Theme One - Tradition of Excellence**

**Goal:** Snow College honors its history and advances its rich traditions of learning by providing a vibrant learning environment that empowers students to achieve their educational goals.

#### **Brief Description of the Core Theme**

Since its founding in 1888, the College has focused on understanding students and their educational aspirations and then aligning the resources of the institution to support them. Local, state, and national recognition of Snow College's excellent programs and services has brought attention to the quality of the faculty and staff who work at the College. By maintaining the highest-quality instructional and student-success programs, capitalizing on the small-campus ambiance, and utilizing superb facilities, Snow College strives to be second to none in helping students succeed in their educational preparation for the future.

#### **Objectives and Key Performance Indicators**

1. Students completing degrees or certificates demonstrate competency in the general education and/or career and technical education outcomes.

1.1 Standardized exam results (e.g., Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency)

- 1.2 Students' perceptions of their experience at Snow College. (e.g., Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire, Community College Survey of Student Engagement)
- 1.3 Comparative data (e.g., National Community College Benchmark Project)
- \*1.4 Demonstration of general education competencies

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because data for indicators 1.1 and 1.2 are already available at the College, or will be. The data for 1.3, the national benchmark, will be available during the coming fall semester. The institution acquires information about 1.4 from a variety of sources to measure students' achievement of the competencies. The General Education Committee of the College reviews, updates, and aligns the general education outcomes and career and technical education outcomes with the focus of the Utah System of Higher Education on the Essential Learning Outcomes of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. The indicators are meaningful because they will provide multiple perspectives about the extent to which students are achieving the identified outcomes. (Indicator 1.4 and others with asterisks included under the core themes are identified by the American Association of Community Colleges as being some of their "Core Indicators of Institutional Effectiveness for Community Colleges.")

2. Students completing degrees or certificates demonstrate achievement of the learning goals in their instructional program.

- \*2.1 Program learning outcomes

Rationale for Indicators: The indicator is assessable because the faculty members have identified learning outcomes for each program and indicators for assessment. The assessment data collected are reviewed and used to guide improvements. The indicator is meaningful because it addresses a primary reason that most students attend college, i.e., to achieve the learning expectations in their chosen discipline.

3. Students' achieve their intended educational goals at Snow College.

- \*3.1 Persistence rates (comparison of student intentions at the time their original application for admission was submitted to the student's actual behavior)
- \*3.2 Graduation rates
- 3.3 Students' perceptions of their experiences at Snow College. (e.g., Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire, Community College Survey of Student Engagement)

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because persistence and graduation rates are available from Institutional Research data. Student surveys are collected and are, or will be, available. The indicators are meaningful because they reflect the completion rates of students and their judgments about their experience at the College in pursuit of their educational goals. Such information is one important part of determining how well Snow is serving students.

4. Students succeed when they transfer.

\*4.1 Transfer rates

\*4.2 Performance after transfer

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable when the College obtains information about former students who have transferred to other institutions. Such information is available from Utah's Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and also the National Student Clearinghouse. The indicators are meaningful because they measure transfer student success, a major emphasis of the College.

5. Students succeed in the workforce when they find employment in their chosen field.

\*5.1 Licensure and certification pass rates

\*5.2 Job placement rates

\*5.3 Employer satisfaction with graduates

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable to the extent the information can be obtained from the various sources. Licensure and certification information requires working with the appropriate licensing agencies. Utah's Department of Workforce Services and student surveys can help in collecting job placement rates. Obtaining useful information from current employers regarding Snow College graduates is more challenging, but an effort to which the College is firmly committed. Snow College recently created a new position entitled Career Services Advisor and filled the position this past summer. It is expected that the advisor will obtain the information outlined above. The indicators are meaningful because they help the College understand how well career and technical students are prepared for obtaining relevant jobs and performing successfully for their employers.

6. Exiting students are satisfied with the services provided by the administrative departments of the College.

6.1 Students' perceptions of their experiences at Snow College. (e.g., Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire, Community College Survey of Student Engagement)

Rationale for Indicators: The indicator is assessable because the information can be obtained without significant effort. The indicator is meaningful because it goes beyond a focus on student learning outcomes only and seeks student evaluations about the totality of their experience at the College.

## ***Core Theme Two - Culture of Innovation***

**Goal:** Through initiatives that create and sustain a college-wide culture of innovation, Snow College encourages and supports innovation by developing dynamic teaching, learning, and engagement experiences for students, faculty, and staff, as well as for the larger College community. Core Theme Two, and all that this core theme involves, represents a new strategic initiative for Snow College. As such, year one of this initiative, as elaborated below, includes pioneering new processes and organizational structures to support and advance innovation and creativity for the College.

### **Brief Description of the Core Theme**

Snow College's ability to adapt and lead out in effective instruction is critical to the educational model. Core Theme Two – Culture of Innovation serves as a model to students suggesting how they should perform in their future careers. By adopting an innovative approach, students engage in dialogue that drives new thoughts and ideas in society. The College also encourages and facilitates the pursuit and application of innovations by faculty and staff members. By fostering innovation, the College expects to draw partners to our campuses to join in synergizing ideas that lead to the advancement of human potential.

### **Objectives and Key Performance Indicators**

1. The College creates a cultural “blueprint” that encourages innovative curricular and co-curricular practices.
  - 1.1 The establishment and continuing operation of an Innovation Task Force to serve as a resource for curricular and co-curricular creative pursuits of faculty, staff, and students.
  - 1.2 The authoring and compiling of a series of white papers internally circulated to promote instructional and service creativity.
  - 1.3 The compilation of an end-of-the year document presented to the College Strategic Planning Committee and the Board of Trustees, as well as to the general College community, highlighting and assessing innovative initiatives, plans for incorporating “best practice” results in ongoing instructional practices, and dissemination of results for ongoing stimulation of innovation college-wide.

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because the existence of a committee, the availability of white papers, and the presence of an end-of-year document

will all be knowable. The indicators are meaningful because they will provide some evidence that the College is making progress in developing a culture of innovation.

2. The College supports a culture of innovation by allocating a portion of its resources to promote inventive responses to needs identified during regular assessment procedures.

2.1 The creation and funding of faculty and/or staff proposals based on assessment that pioneer innovative teaching and learning practices and student-success services.

2.2 The organization of an “Innovation Symposium” for faculty, staff, and student leaders through which efforts toward a culture of innovation are shared, recognized, and celebrated.

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable through the creation of a proposal system and/or policies that reward faculty for innovative efforts. The intended measure in 2.1 will help establish benchmarks regarding the number of proposals approved and funds allocated for subsequent years. The indicator further challenges faculty to export their innovative ideas to a broader market of peers and professionals (state, regional, national). The “Innovation Symposium” is an internal event that can highlight the unique efforts of faculty and staff to better engage students in the higher learning process. Holding the event at the end of spring semester provides a measurable way to celebrate and encourage innovative accomplishments. The indicators are meaningful because they provide information about the financial and organizational support the College is providing to sustain a culture of innovation.

3. The College seeks out, analyzes, and incorporates new/best practices to promote/maximize student success.

3.1 Number/percentage of College employees who participate in professional development activities (e.g., state, national, or international professional conferences and seminars; on-campus activities such as Teaching and Technology Center training, Lunch Bunch, campus book discussions, division seminars)

3.2 Number/percentage of College employees who incorporate information and skills obtained from professional development activities into their work

3.3 Summary reports of faculty and staff self-evaluations of their success in using best practices obtained from professional development activities

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable through annual dean reviews of faculty, yearly updates of program assessment plans, and staff reviews by supervisors. The indicators are meaningful because they assess the extent to which College employees use professional development activities to reflect on and improve courses and other student services by integrating best practices used at other institutions or in business. The indicators will also provide feedback as to how well imported innovations are working at the College.

4. The College creates a culture of innovation by encouraging creative and original thinking among its students

4.1 The College provides exposure/instruction to new freshmen on creative thinking in the classroom during its Start Smart Orientation program.

4.2 Each academic division actively identifies and promotes teaching and learning activities that encourage innovation and problem-solving thinking by students.

4.3 Based on student feedback, the College sustains a culture of innovation by adjusting its curricular offerings to benefit a wide-range of students. Such adjustments may include (but are not limited to) course redesign, new course offerings, program changes, and partnerships.

4.4 The College measures the use of innovative student learning strategies as a standard question on each course evaluation.

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because the Start Smart curriculum and course evaluations can be reviewed to verify the information is presented and evaluated. Reports from the academic divisions can outline the efforts made to teach and support innovation. The indicators are meaningful because they provide additional information about what the College is doing to create a culture of innovation in the classroom.

### ***Core Theme Three - Atmosphere of Engagement***

**Goal:** Snow College creates learning and service opportunities, locally and globally, to engage students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities.

#### **Brief Description of the Core Theme**

Snow College is a significant contributor to the quality of life in the College's service area, providing programs and activities that enrich and connect with the population of central Utah. The College works to accomplish its commitment to engagement by providing a variety of student-centered activities and experiences; programs and activities that connect with surrounding communities; and collaborative experiences involving students, faculty and community members on Snow College's campus and beyond. Connecting with and engaging students, faculty, and community members in such activities are particularly important to the mission of Snow College given its rural location.

## **Objectives and Key Performance Indicators**

1. The College develops the whole student through wide-ranging student-centered activities and experiences.

1.1 Students' perceptions of their experience at Snow College related to engagement (e.g., Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire)

1.2 Number/percentage of students involved in structured, organized service-learning activities

1.3 Number/percentage of students involved in defined student "leadership" activities at the College

1.4 Number of global-learning and engagement projects and/or experiences in which students and faculty participate.

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because the data can be obtained. The College currently has the results of several administrations of the Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire and will have results from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. The data for indicators 1.2 and 1.3 can be obtained from reports by instructional divisions and the Student Success administrative division. The indicators are meaningful because they provide multiple perspectives on the variety and richness of student involvement at the College.

2. The College creates collaborative discipline-specific professional engagement experiences among students and faculty.

2.1 Number of faculty-directed events that employ classroom instruction in real-world and field-work settings.

2.2 Number of professional conferences in which students and faculty collectively participate or present

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable by requesting annual reports from faculty members outlining their involvement in the experiences stated above. The indicators are meaningful because the information reported will help the College understand the extent of student and faculty involvement in such activities.

3. The College connects with and enriches surrounding communities.

3.1 Number of high school and middle school students who participate in academic activities sponsored by divisions or departments at the College (e.g., math contest, subject-specific events, career exploration events)

3.2 Number of adults and seniors who participate in continuing and community education activities

\*3.3 Responsiveness to community needs

\*3.4 Number/percentage of community members who attend or participate in College-sponsored events and programs

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because the data can be obtained, however planning and analysis will be required to reach useful conclusions. The indicators are meaningful because a major purpose of the College is to improve the quality of life for the people of the region by responding to the needs of individuals, business, and communities. The College is the cultural and educational center for the region providing access to many College-sponsored events and programs that enrich the lives of community members who participate.

4. The College fulfills its regional stewardship role by helping to establish “sustainable regions” defined as “innovative economies, livable communities, collaborative governance and social inclusion.”

4.1 Number of new programs in career and technical fields that are created in response to identified local needs

4.2 Percentage increase in the average per capita income in the six-county region relative to the state per capita average

4.3 Percentage increase in the number of non-government jobs in the region

Rationale for Indicators: The indicators are assessable because the numbers can be collected. The indicators are meaningful because one of the significant purposes of the Institution is to serve the rural area of central Utah and boost the economies of local communities. Data collected will give a picture of the extent to which the College is involved in this task and succeeding in the same, and if improvement is needed.

## **Conclusion**

Snow College welcomes the new standards and schedule for institutional review approved by the Northwest Commission. As an institution, we are re-designing our approach and renewing our commitment to ongoing assessment and improvement. We are working on being more focused and deliberate in our identification of student learning outcomes and administrative department goals, conducting appropriate assessments and then utilizing assessment information to drive needed improvements. To assist us with that process, the College purchased an assessment management system called TracDat. The new system will be in place for Fall Semester 2011. Information for all courses, instructional programs, and administrative departments will be entered into the system and managed with the aid of TracDat.

Snow College continues to make progress with student learning outcomes and administrative department goal setting, assessment, and improvement making, but we also recognize that we are undertaking an ongoing project that will never end. We are

committed to making continuous improvements in the quality of our service to our students and other stakeholders. We regard the new standards and accreditation process as an aid to that commitment.

## **Appendix**

### **Members of the Accreditation Steering Committee**

Margie Anderson, Registrar  
Dan Black, Dean, Natural Science and Mathematics Division  
Sheryl Bodrero, Dean, Humanities Division  
Rosie Connor, Director, Philanthropic Initiatives  
Sue Dalley, Dean, Social and Behavioral Sciences Division  
Doug Dyreng, Dean, Business and Technology Division  
Amber Epling, Director, Allied Health  
Erick Faatz, Chair, Curriculum Committee and faculty member in English  
Beckie Hermansen, Director, Institutional Research  
Spencer Hill, Budget Director  
Susan Larsen, Director of Student Services  
Vance Larsen, Dean, Fine Arts  
Jon Ostler, Director, Library  
Alex Peterson, Assistant Director, International Student Center  
Gary Smith, Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Student representatives  
Rick White, Associate Vice President for Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness