



# A Blueprint for the Future

December 29, 2011

TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE



CULTURE OF INNOVATION



ATMOSPHERE OF ENGAGEMENT



# Snow College

is approaching its 125th anniversary and could, if so disposed, spend away the celebration “resting on its laurels.” Such a posture might seem reasonable in light of the fact that the College has just been recognized as one of the top two-year colleges in America while, at the same time, implementing budget cuts approximating 19.6%. However, this unlikely combination of national recognition and budget cuts has fueled the College’s motivation to take careful inventory of its potential and push itself to become even better in fulfilling its mission. The College has challenged itself to become the best two-year college in the West—it is an exhilarating challenge. This document represents the College’s plan to build on past successes and achieve its goal of becoming the best two-year college. This plan is not being undertaken in a vacuum. Undergirding the College’s plan is the Utah System of Higher Education’s *HigherEdUtah2020* strategic plan approved by the State Board of Regents on December 9, 2010.

The first step in putting together this plan for Snow College, referred to as the

*Blueprint For Snow College’s Future*, is a review of the Utah System of Higher Education’s *HigherEdUtah2020* strategic plan with its accompanying “big goal” and three strategic priorities; second, a recognition of Snow College’s place and partners in the Utah System of Higher Education; third a reasonably objective view of the College’s preparation to assist in the strategic priorities; and finally, the development of Centers for Opportunities at the College, with attending initiatives, aligned with State strategic priorities.





## I

### UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S, *HigherEdUtah2020*, STRATEGIC PLAN

The motivation for the state strategic plan is set forth in its purpose statement. "Governor Gary R. Herbert has called upon the Utah State Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Higher Education to present a plan for how Utah's colleges and universities will meet the needs of students and the talent demands of employers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The purpose of [the *HigherEdUtah2020*] document is to answer the Governor's call to unify state efforts to increase the level of educational attainment of its citizens."

According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 66% of all jobs in Utah by 2018 will require postsecondary education. At present only 39% of Utahns hold an associate degree or higher. The basis for the *HigherEdUtah2020* plan is to establish a goal of reaching 66% and provide the direction to accomplish it. The plan provides, "The Board of Regents and Commissioner of Higher Education have set a big goal for Utah: to have 66% of Utahns—men and women aged 25 to 64—with a postsecondary degree or certificate by the year 2020; specifically, to have 55% of Utah's workforce with an associate degree or higher and 11% with a postsecondary certificate that leads to a livable wage." This is a mammoth task. To reach the big goal by 2020 Utah colleges and universities will need to collectively enroll approximately 76,000 students in addition to the projected natural growth of 33,000 students for a total of 109,000 enrollments beyond 2009 levels. Fewer new enrollments will be need if completion rates improve from 2009 levels.



To accomplish the big goal the Board of Regents set three strategic priorities: (1) increase student participation in higher education, (2) increase the rate of student completion, and (3) increase the level of economic innovation. Within each of these priorities the State strategic plan enumerates a number of initiatives. *HigherEdUtah2020* is a 151-page document. This Blueprint is a brief summary of Snow College's direction in furtherance of the plan. It is intended to be a dynamic document, expected to evolve and fill-in as the College moves forward.

## II

### SNOW COLLEGE WITHIN THE UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

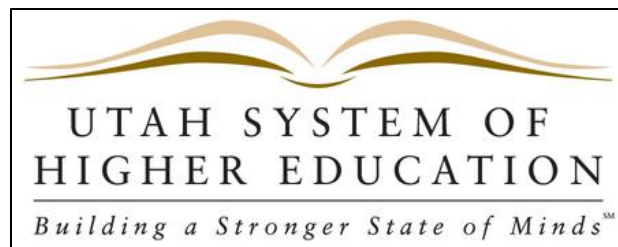
Snow College is a member of the Utah System of Higher Education, which includes two research universities, three four-year regional universities, a liberal arts university, a comprehensive community college, and a

residential junior college, in Snow College. The Utah System of Higher Education is unlike any other state system. The difference is most evident in the way it approaches the community college mission. The average state in America has 24 community colleges; Utah has one fully comprehensive community college, in Salt Lake Community College.

Snow College is not accurately described as a community college. It is more precisely a residential junior college that strives to meet certain aspects of the community college mission, such as workforce preparation and economic development in its six-county primary service region of central Utah. Utah also has several universities successfully meeting aspects of the community college mission.

As reported in 2011 by Dennis Jones, President of National Council for Higher Educational Management Systems, Utah's system of Higher Education is unique. It is more of a blended system with most institutions meeting a broad range of regional needs, which in other states would be served separately by a community college and a university.

Being part of a state system is important to Snow College and its students. A full enumeration of the benefits to Snow College for being part of the Utah System of Higher Education is not the intent of this document. However, the benefits include such items as regular scheduled majors meetings with faculty from all the institutions, common course numbering through all institutions and united messaging to the Governor and State Legislature.



The College also enjoys collaborative relationships with departments in every college and university in the state. Academic program-specific partnerships are in place, or being explored, with every university in Utah. The most significant relationship is with Utah State University who has three of its faculty members housed and teaching upper division courses on the Snow College Ephraim Campus. They offer classes in early childhood development, education and agribusiness. Students can earn one of 17 bachelor's degrees, 15 master's degrees and one doctorate from Utah State University Extension in classrooms on Snow College's campuses.

Additionally, the University of Utah, Weber State University and Southern Utah University all offer classes and degree programs on Snow College's campuses. The College actively seeks and supports partnerships with any willing Utah college or university. Every proposal from Snow College to the Board of Regents for new programs contemplated in this document will follow an assessment by the College of need, the most efficient manner in which to deliver the program and any opportunities to partner with other institutions.

### III

#### **SNOW COLLEGE'S PREPARATION TO ASSIST IN THE STATE'S THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The following is a review of the three state strategic priorities and Snow College's preparation to assist in achieving the big goal through these priorities.

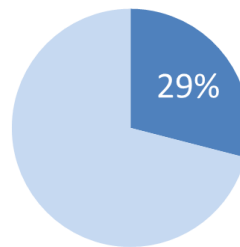
##### *A. THE FIRST STATE STRATEGIC PRIORITY ADDRESSED IN THIS BLUEPRINT IS THE RATE OF STUDENT COMPLETION IN THEIR CHOSEN FIELD OF STUDY OR TRAINING.*

The most fertile ground for increasing the number of people in the State of Utah with degrees and certificates is to better assist those already in the System to complete their graduation goals. Snow College's completion rate is here compared to three groups of institutions. First, to all community colleges in America; second, to all two-year colleges in Snow College's designated peer list; and third, to all colleges and universities in the Utah System of Higher Education. Snow College has a mission to transfer students on to receiving universities. The fourth point in this section will be a discussion of the College's transfer rate, for a more full picture of student completion and success. The final points include three reasons for the College's high graduation rate—advising and retentions efforts, quality educational experience and the unique learning environment at Snow College.

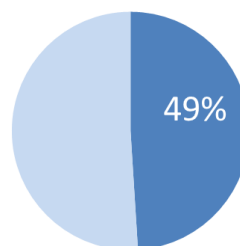
##### **1. All Community Colleges.**

According to Complete College America, a national nonprofit organization devoted to increasing the number of Americans with career certificates or college degrees, only 29% of full-time students who start at a community college graduate with an associate degree within three years. Snow College's three-year graduation rate is 20 points or 60% higher than the national average. Forty-nine percent of freshmen who start at Snow College earn an associate degree within three years (IPEDS Fall 2006 cohort).

**National Average  
Associate Degree in 3 years for  
Full Time Students**



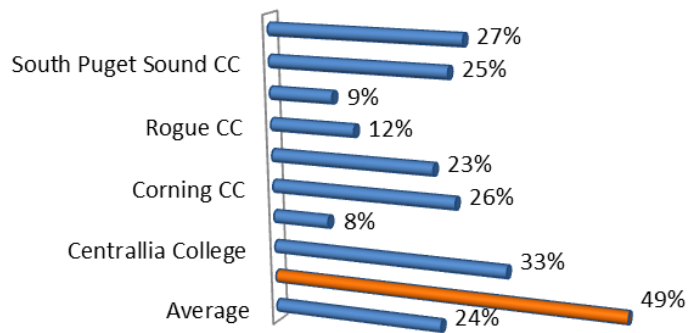
**Snow College Average  
Associate Degree in 3 years for  
Full Time Students**



## 2. National Peer List.

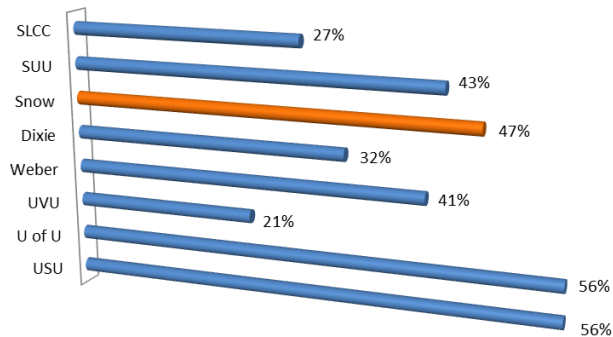
The 2011 USHE Institutional Retention & Graduation Report provides comparable data for Snow College and its Board of Regents' designated peer list. As has been noted above, Snow College's three-year graduation rate is 49%. The next closest peer is Centralia College, in Washington, with 33%; the average among all peers is 24%—half Snow College's rate. The data is equally striking for the two-year and four-year rates, where Snow College is 27 and 24 percentage points above average, respectively. Snow College's four-year graduation rate is 58%.

**Completion Rates - Peer Institutions**



**3. USHE Institutions.** Typically, two-year institutions avoid comparisons with universities on graduation rates. Community and junior colleges take all comers regardless of preparation and, as a result, have fewer graduates. Data from Complete College America bears this out. The average national six-year graduation rate for bachelor's degrees at all universities in the country is 55%, which is nearly twice the community college three-year graduation rate of 29%. However, according to the 2011 USHE Institutional Retention & Graduation Report, Snow College's completion rate is higher than all regional universities in Utah (Based on 2010 IPEDS Data). The only two institutions with a higher rate are the two

**Completion Rates - USHE**



research universities. Their rates are both nine points higher.

## 4. Graduation Rates Including Transfers.

The Utah System of Higher Education comparison is not complete with graduation rates only. Snow College, as a junior college, has a specific mission to transfer its university-bound students to baccalaureate-granting institutions. If Snow College's four-year graduation rate is combined with its transfer-prior-to-



**Snow College Graduation 2010**



graduation rate, the percentage of students who complete within that time climbs to 79%. Included within the “non-completing” 21% are a certain number of career bound students with goals less than graduation or transfer. These students are looking for career and technical skills that can be acquired in a semester or two. This number is difficult to quantify, but, needless to say, the total completion rate (graduation, transfer prior to graduation, and career and technical students who stop after acquiring the sought-after skills) exceeds 80%.

Without too much editorial flourish, it is fair to say that Snow College’s completion rate is remarkable. And the College plans to increase it by a half percent per year over the next ten years.

Snow College’s successful completion rate is nationally recognized. In April 2011, the Aspen Institute recognized Snow College among the top 10% of all two-year colleges in the country. This recognition, which the College neither applied for nor lobbied to receive, is part of the Community College Excellence Program first announced at the White House Summit on Community Colleges held in October 2010. Between this announcement and April 2011, an advisory committee co-chaired by William Trueheart, chief executive officer of Achieving the Dream, a non-profit that works to help community college students succeed, and Keith Bird, former chancellor of the Kentucky Community College System, analyzed publically available data on student outcomes at community colleges across the country under three criteria. Their analysis included: (1) performance (retention, graduation rates including transfers, and degrees and certificates for full-time students); (2) improvement of completion performance over time; and (3) equity (institutional record for completion outcomes for disadvantaged students).



**President Barack Obama, with Dr. Jill Biden, announces the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence at the first-ever White House Summit on Community Colleges**

**5. Retention Efforts.** The College has invested in programs, tutoring and success classes that lead to higher retention and graduation rates. And with 10 full-time professional advisors it is believed the College has a higher advisor-to-student ratio (1 to 440) than any other college in Utah.

**6. Quality of Educational Experience.** The quality of the education students receive while at Snow College is a significant factor in its high completion rate. Any institutional researcher, working on accreditation, can attest that quality of education is a difficult measure to assess. However, it is a quality education that keeps a student progressing toward graduation, fully prepares her for the workforce and enriches her life. It is essential for any person who lives in a democracy. As the HigherEdUtah 2020 document aptly observes, “While graduating more students is critical, the quality of the

students that Utah institutions graduate is even more critical.”

Two-year colleges provide a high quality education. In their book, *Crossing the Finish Line*, Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson (2009) concluded transfer students [from two-year colleges] do better in four-year universities than if they had come directly from high school with the same credentials.

The only statewide comparable program-to-program assessment the College administration is aware of is the Utah Statewide Writing Portfolio Assessment from 2002-2003, reported in a memorandum dated July 29, 2004, from then Commissioner Richard E. Kendall to the State Board of Regents. The project, conducted under the supervision of the Commissioner’s office, assessed the composition skills of beginning-of-semester, first-year students in Writing 1010; these students were also evaluated at the end of the semester in their second writing class, Writing 2010.

The project rated essays on a point system and calculated the educational value added by the two courses at each institution. Results were calculated for each college and university in the Utah system. As noted in the



Commissioner’s memo to the Regents: “Especially notable . . . are the results for Snow College, whose incoming freshman averaged the lowest of any of the schools, but whose outgoing 2010 students averaged the highest . . .” The College took the least skilled writers and after two semester classes turned them into the best writers, according to the Utah Statewide Writing Portfolio Assessment. The College believes the same quality evidenced in writing classes would be seen in other academic areas, if similarly assessed.

The College considers its science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs to be exceptional. For example, all Snow College students who applied to pharmacy schools over the last four years were accepted; 95% were accepted over the last 15 years. Similar data can be produced for other pre-medical and pre-engineering programs.

Support also exists to illustrate the quality of Snow College’s fine arts programs. Dr. Laurie Carter, Vice President and General

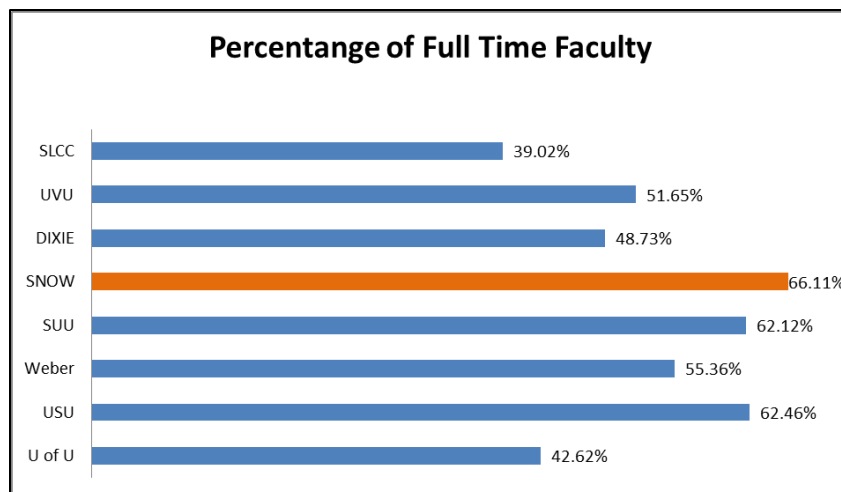


**Dr. Laurie Carter**

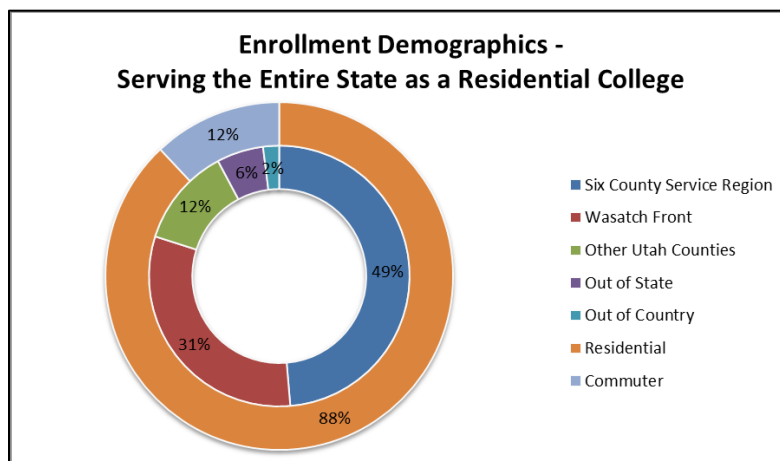
Counsel and also Executive Director of Jazz Studies at The Juilliard School wrote of their exclusive partnership with Snow College: “The Juilliard School has collaborated with Snow College for the past six years. During that time, Juilliard faculty, students and staff in the areas of dance, drama and music have enjoyed the privilege of working with Snow students, faculty and staff. Juilliard’s relationship with Snow has been mutually beneficial. As the primary liaison with Snow, I have first-hand experience with the level of professionalism and the quality of programs, facilities and personnel at Snow College.” The instruction in English, STEM disciplines and the arts, discussed above, are illustrative of the quality education students experience across the broad range of offerings at Snow College.

**7. Snow College’s Unique Learning Environment is Well-Suited for Student Success.** The College has the largest percentage of full-time faculty members in the System. Most of these faculty members live within walking distance of the college and make themselves available to their students during the day and evening hours.

Snow College is the state’s most residential college. Approximately 90% of the students matriculated at the Ephraim campus live on or within walking distance of the campus. This combination of “resident” faculty and resident students leads to more student interactions with faculty members and an increase in co-curricular and extra-curricular activity participation.



Research supports the fact that residential students are more engaged in effective educational practices than commuter students. Kuth, Gonyea and Palmer, Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning, conducted one such survey of student engagement. They reported, “Residential students were more engaged in effective educational practices and—in all likelihood—were benefiting more from their college experience.” In particular, residential students have more interaction with faculty



members and are more likely to take advantage of such opportunities as co-curricular activities, field trips, and community service.

In addition to the co-curricular activities available at Snow College, students may choose from more than 50 extra-curricular clubs and organizations in which to participate. Non-duplicative data is difficult to collect, but it is estimated that more than three-fourths of all Snow College students actively participate in at least one extra-curricular club or organization.

There is voluminous evidence to support the fact that students are more likely to stay on through graduation if



they are involved in extra-curricular activities. Jing Wang and Jonathan

Shiveley from the Office of Institutional Research at California State University, Sacramento found that “students achieved much higher rates of retention and graduation, maintained better GPAs, and had higher good standing rates when they engaged in any [extra-curricular] activities.”

The residential learning community at Snow College is a significant component in leading students to higher graduation rates.

***B. THE SECOND STATE STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUND IN THE BOARD OF REGENTS’ MASTER PLAN IS TO INCREASE THE RATE OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION.***

The *HigherEdUtah2020 plan* sets forth the need for considerable growth in student enrollments. The goal to increase the percent of Utahns with a postsecondary degree or certificate to 66% by the year 2020 is ambitious and achievable, with considerable effort.

To accomplish the 66% goal, the 2020 plan recognizes that “Utah will need to enroll an additional 76,000 students over and above the expected growth of 33,000 students, totaling 109,000 students needing access to Utah’s higher education network by the year 2020.” This increase, “is roughly equal to adding another University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Dixie State College and Snow College to the state’s higher education network within ten years. Obviously, such a massive expansion of physical facilities is unrealistic.” Institutions capable of



growing at higher than previously expected rates, without significant physical facility expansions, will be pivotal in reaching the State's big goal to enroll an additional 109,000 students.

Snow College's enrollment history, capacity for an increased rate of growth through 2020, efficiency in leading students to graduation, relatively low cost to educate lower division students, preparation for growth and a limitation for growth are discussed below.

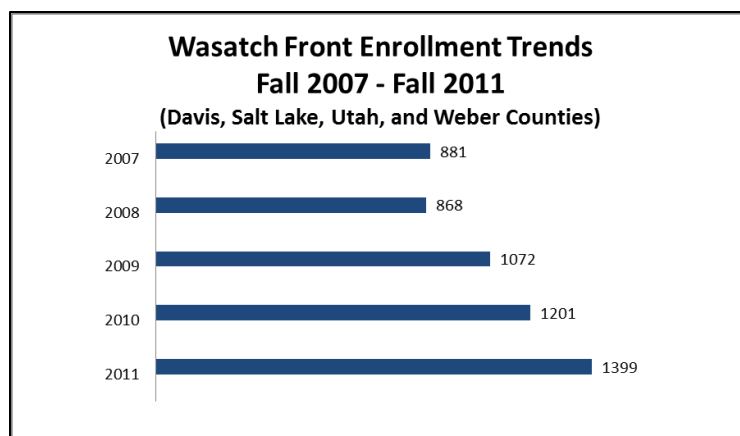
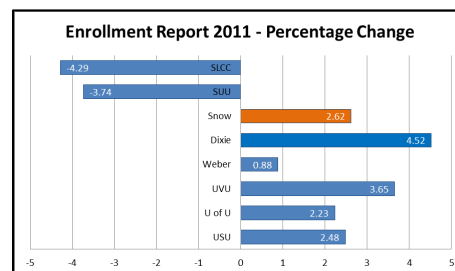
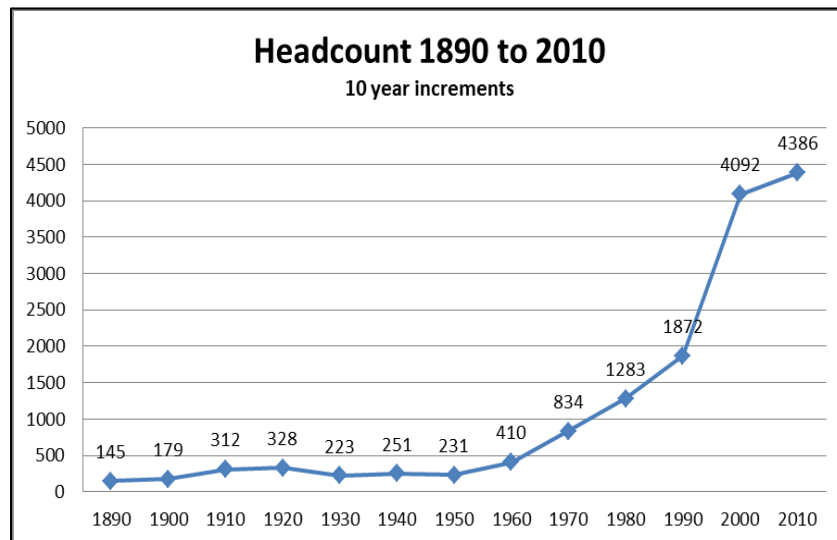
### 1. Enrollment History.

The College's enrollment history is unremarkable from its start in 1888 through World War II. However, from 1950 on, the College more than doubled in size every 20 years. It increased 3.6 times from 1950 through 1970, 2.2

times from 1970 through 1990, and 2.3 times from 1990 to 2010. If these increases continue, the College will exceed 10,000 students by 2030. With additional effort the College can grow faster. This past year, Snow College's growth rate was third highest in the state.

The nation's 1,200 community colleges (an average of 24 per state, including the District of Columbia) typically draw students from the community in which they sit. As Utah's sole residential junior college, Snow College serves a statewide population and attracts students from its four corners.

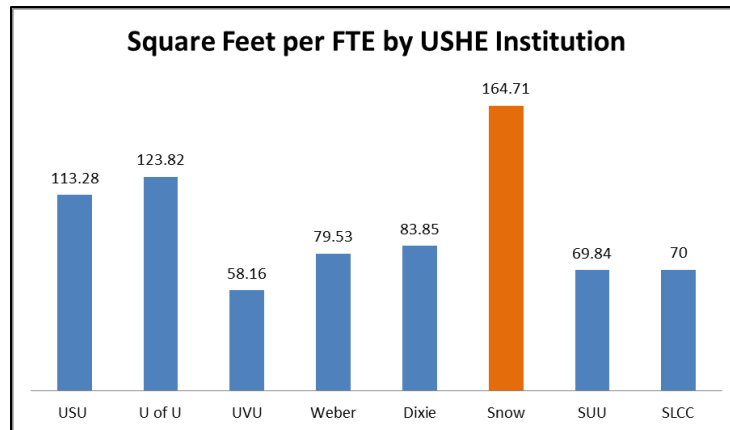
Snow College has demonstrated an ability to attract students from all regions in the state. Of particular note is the recent growth of students from the Wasatch Front. Students from Wasatch Front counties have increased by 59% over the past four years, outgrowing the College's overall growth rate for the same period.



The College experienced a 130% increase in students from Utah County alone over the past four years. Snow College's lower division student enrollments are now within 10% of Southern Utah University's lower division enrollments.

**2. Capacity for Increased Rate of Growth through 2020.** A look at capacity for growth begins with a review of the College's current physical facilities and budget. The Commissioner's office completed an analysis of square feet per full-time-equivalent student by institution in 2011. The results indicate Snow College has more square feet per FTE student than any other institution in the system.

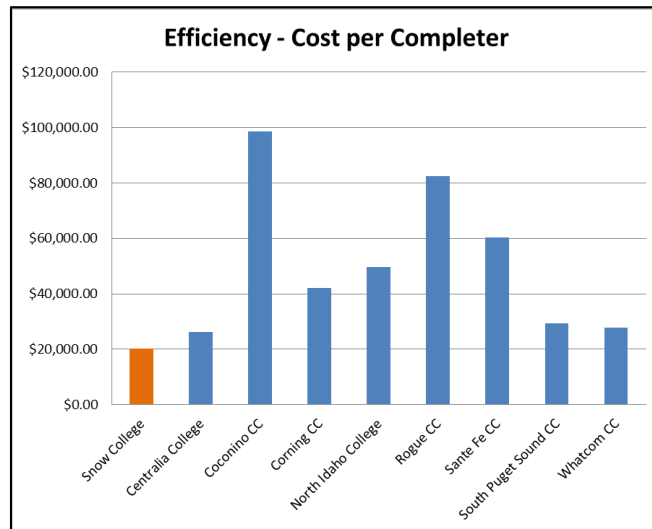
Further, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) conducted a funding study for the Utah System of Higher Education. The September 11, 2011 report noted Snow College is funded above its peer group median. Snow College is funded at 114.3% of its national peer group median.



Snow College is well positioned to share in the burden of helping the state enroll the additional 109,000 students needing access to Utah's higher education network by the year 2020. However, significant growth will require a focused effort on the part of Snow College and the support of the Board of Regents and Commissioner's office. It will not require additional state funds for new construction.

**3. Snow College is Very Efficient in Leading Students to Graduation.** It is common to compare graduation rates among colleges and universities; it is also common to compare resource data, such as square footage and budgets, among institutions. Unfortunately, it has not been the practice to link the two together and consider graduation rates as the productive use of the resources. Stated in business terms—the System and NCHEMS studies, cited above, compare inputs of production without considering outputs. They compare appropriations and square footage per FTE student, regardless of how many of these students fail to become a “finished product ready for the market or democracy.” The data produced by the studies provide indispensable factors of the equation but fall short of delivering a meaningful answer. It is not a fair comparison to simply relate cost per FTE student at one college to cost per FTE student at another college, where the two institutions have differing rates of graduation unless the goal or intended output is something other than graduates. Those who drop out of college prior to graduation may have gained from their experience, but the student and State fail to realize the full return on their investment. This failure should somehow be taken into consideration for a fair analysis of efficiency.

Consider the following simple analysis of the data presented in the NCHEMS funding study combined with the data in the USHE Graduation Report. It is acknowledged this is not a complete analysis, but it helps inform the question of productive use of resources. Both reports are based on the institutional peer list. Data from the graduation report indicates a cohort of 1,380 full-time Snow College students (IPEDS 2006). The NCHEMS study provides a total funding of \$9,885 per FTE student (2008-09). If we take the number of students and multiply it by the cost per student we arrive at a total one-year cost of \$13,641,300. Finally, if we divide the cost for all students by the number who actually graduate within three years, 49%, we arrive at a comparative cost of \$20,173 per graduate. Again, this simple analysis falls short of providing a precise cost per graduate, but it helps illustrate the issue and provides data for comparison. Following the same formula with each of the College's designated peers leads to the conclusion that Snow College is the most efficient among its peers *when the number of graduates is acknowledged as the intended outcome* rather than the number of enrollments. A similar analysis could be done among the USHE institutions.



**4. Direct Cost for Lower Division Instruction.** The direct cost per student for lower division instruction at the University of Utah is \$4,512 and at Utah State University it is \$3,448, according to the USHE 2011 Data Book. Snow College's direct cost is \$3,346—\$1,166 less than at the University of Utah and \$102 less than at Utah State University. Based on these data, Snow College is a good bargain for the state. Students might be encouraged to do their lower division work at Snow College and then transfer to the research universities for upper division work.

**5. Preparation For Growth in Student Enrollments.** The budget and space efficiency studies reveal the potential and need for Snow College to absorb higher numbers of students than might have otherwise been expected. The College is prepared for growth. Between 2010 and 2011, the College remodeled its former library into a classroom building; acquired the vacated Ephraim Elementary School, contiguous to the campus for business instruction; and remodeled space on the Richfield campus to add teaching and laboratory space for science and nursing courses. New student housing is being constructed on the Ephraim campus by the College and also by private investors. Private housing has recently been built near the Richfield campus. The College has capacity to grow and can virtually double its student body, on the margins, without a need for new construction.

The College's potential to relieve some of the pressure placed on the very high growth institutions while assuming a larger responsibility in meeting the State's strategic plan growth needs seems evident.

#### 6. Student Enrollments at Snow College Are Limited by Degree Options.

Relative to Snow College, the Board of Regents' *HigherEdUtah 2020* plan provides, "Student opportunities at [Snow] College will be limited by academic degree options. The Regents may consider expanding the number and type of degrees to be offered where the expansion promotes academic quality at the College . . . or helps accommodate increased demand throughout the state for access to higher education." Proposals for expanding the number and type of degree options—within current Regent policy R-312-4.4—at Snow College are outlined in the final section of this document, under the heading, Snow College Centers for Opportunities. The College wants to remain within its state and Carnegie Foundation definition as a community or associate college (junior college). But the College accepts the challenge to propose new degree options, "where the expansion promotes academic quality at the College . . . [and] helps accommodate increased demand throughout the state for access to higher education."

#### C. THE THIRD STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOR THE STATE MASTER PLAN IS TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF ECONOMIC INNOVATION.

The plan anticipates a much stronger effort to align state colleges and universities with workforce needs and to "establish a climate where partnerships among government, education, and industry flourish." Snow College's primary service region consists of six rural counties and combined has the lowest per-capita income of any other USHE institution's service region in the state. The region has been in a self-described "perma-recession" for decades. The College is rapidly growing its data-driven and community engagement efforts to more aggressively assist the local economy.

Over the course of the past three years, four career and technical education programs have been suspended, two programs have been consolidated, several programs have been reduced in size, realigned, or expanded, and new programs are being evaluated—based on labor data. The following two examples are illustrative of how labor data has been used to lead the college to closing a popular, growing program and investing in a small, inefficient program.

Recently, Snow College carefully examined its career and technical education programs. The College gathered all available externally





collected data and increased its own internal data collection efforts. With the particular help of the Utah Department of Workforce Services and local economic development officials, the College concluded that (1) most of what is being offered is vital to regional labor needs, (2) four of its programs were not likely to lead completing students to related careers in the region due to a persistent lack of job openings, and (3) there are significant labor needs in the region for which the College has no training programs.

One of the programs that could not be expected to lead completing students to related careers in rural Utah was a small, growing culinary arts program that trained students, provided catering services on campus and provided a popular lunch for faculty, staff and students. However, data provided by Workforce Services economists and confirmed by local economic development and industry leaders revealed that in the rural counties of the state (1) there are approximately 9,960 jobs in the food preparation and serving-related occupations, (2) for the next 10 years 570 openings are expected each year, but (3) none of the openings in the region are expected to require more than short-term, on-the-job training. All completing students can be successful in getting a job in the region—but the jobs are almost exclusively entry-level, minimum wage jobs. The program was not helping the local economy in a meaningful manner; it was not presenting the possibility for graduating students to secure good-paying jobs in rural Utah. As a result, the program was suspended in 2011, and the funds are being reinvested in a new program more helpful to the local economy and workforce needs.

A contrasting example is found in Snow College's pre-engineering program. This program has traditionally experienced relatively low enrollments. But the College has learned from industry leaders that Utah has a shortage of engineers. As a consequence, the College has maintained the program and improved scholarship opportunities at a higher level than enrollments alone would justify.



College employees have spent hundreds of hours, in addition to the time spent on the Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership program, studying the workforce needs in Rural Utah and is aligning its workforce ready programs to meet the needs of local businesses.

#### IV

### SNOW COLLEGE CENTERS FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE *HigherEdUtah2020 PLAN*

Snow College has identified five “Centers for Opportunities,” which are described as clusters of dynamic and strategic focus and initiative for the College. They are not buildings or organizational units; they are incubators of new practices and accomplishments. Reflecting the Mission and Core Themes of the College, they are pathways of excellence, innovation, and engagement to the future for the College and all whom the College serves.

#### THE FIVE CENTERS FOR OPPORTUNITIES ARE:

- NATURAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
- REGIONAL WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- FINE ARTS
- STUDENT LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
- HERITAGE AND TRADITION

Snow College has identified these five Centers for Opportunities based on an extensive and constituency-involved process conducted during 2011. The College finds each center to be well aligned with its mission as a residential junior college. Details for each center are below.

#### A. CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN NATURAL SCIENCE AND

**MATHEMATICS.** Snow College has long enjoyed an excellent reputation in the educational preparation of graduates in natural sciences and mathematics. Its transfer students perform well at receiving universities in Utah and across the country.

Building on this affirmed strength, while seeking to provide maximum workforce-readiness opportunities for graduates, Snow College is developing STEM-relevant, workforce-ready options for students at the certificate and associate degree levels. These options—defined as *workforce-ready and transfer-linked*—lead to AS and AAS degrees firmly grounded in the requisite science and math knowledge and skills and linked to job opportunities.



In consultation with economists from the Utah Department of Workforce Services, regional economic development directors and potential employers, the first initiative of this type is the Natural Resource Management Technician Program in agriculture, forestry, environmental conservation, land and water management, and related fields of employment.

Snow College has partnered with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, regional offices of the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and other related federal and state agencies, to develop a Natural Resource Management Institute. This institute will serve as a platform for providing paid field-based learning experiences and internships—connecting classroom and lab training with projects and experts in the field. Graduates of the Natural Resource Management Technician workforce-ready option will have spent considerable time with professionals in the field and developed the connections to secure meaningful and well-paying jobs in their fields of interest. As their careers advance and as life commitments allow, these graduates can return to universities prepared to earn their bachelor's and master's degrees in the sciences and be well equipped to move on professionally.

Following the Natural Resource Management Technician Program the college will pursue additional workforce-ready and transfer-linked programs. The process for developing new programs will always begin with an analysis of Workforce Services data and consultation with regional economic development officials and industry employers. Future initiatives in the sciences might include such programs as an Energy Plant/Mining Lab Analysis Technician Program and Remote Sensing/GIS Certificate.

It is assumed that most science students at the College will choose to advance immediately upon graduation from Snow College to a university. However, as Snow College creates additional program options all first-year science students will have meaningful opportunities to explore field-based work with professionals in their area of interest.



**The Great Basin Environmental Education Center, located in Ephraim Canyon, is the birthplace of range science. It is being managed by Snow College in partnership with the US Forest Service.**



## B. CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN REGIONAL WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

At no time in the recent history of Snow College has there been more focus and realignment of resources and programs to support regional workforce and economic development efforts than there is at the present time. Snow College relishes its enhanced role of working with the individuals, communities and employers to improve the economic standing of its service region. This is not an easy task. Its six-county region is the most economically challenged in the state.



Snow College's Center for Opportunities in Regional Workforce and Economic Development seeks to change the current picture—by partnering with individuals and organizations throughout the region with the twin goals of (1) raising average per capita income relative to state per capita average, and (2) growing and sustaining the number of private sector jobs.

Four recent initiatives at Snow College reflect the initial action on the part of the College to reach these goals.

First, an intensive and detailed review and realignment of career and technology education programs at the College has been conducted and completed. In coordination with the Utah Department of Workforce Services, local economic development professionals, and regional employers the College has suspended training areas not well aligned with placement in family-wage-paying jobs in the region. Dollars recovered from program suspensions are being reinvested in new training programs, with certificate and AAS degree options. Three additional programs will be presented to the Board of Regents for approval during 2012.

These new programs include AAS degree programs in Industrial Technology, Manufacturing Technology and Facilities Maintenance. Other AAS programs on the near horizon include Energy and Mining Technology and Agriculture Mechanics Technology. The College is planning to deliver these new workforce programs throughout its rural Utah region, making the training accessible to place-bound adults from Delta to Bicknell.

The College is also exploring the possibility of the creation of an Agriculture, Range Innovation and Sustainability Center. Consistent with the established process, programs in the Center for Opportunities in Regional Workforce and Economic Development will always begin with an analysis of Workforce Services data and consultation with regional economic development officials and industry employers. Existing CTE programs that are being continued are



being realigned for improved workforce outcomes based on industry feedback.

Second, the College has established a new office—Continuing Education and Economic Development for three primary purposes: (1) providing a single dedicated portal of connectivity between and among citizens and businesses of the region to better connect college-based and external service providers with those in need of training and educational programs, (2) providing an enhanced and regular sharing of College services and ongoing analysis of and response to evolving training needs in the region, and (3) connecting with the needs of employers in more creative and innovative ways. College services will be more available throughout the region and will include additional short-term certificate and two-year degree options.

Third, the College has recognized the need for much stronger alliances between the training programs of the College and industry. The College has long relied on a single external entity for CTE strategic planning. That entity is a statutorily mandated CTE Advisory Committee.

Participation on the committee is heavily weighted toward K-12 educators and school board members who have a limited ability to engage in comprehensive planning for Snow College. The College has now created smaller working groups to help fully inform all planning and program decisions. The Advisory Committee may serve as a broader K-16 alliance.



Fourth, Snow College has taken the lead role in creating a Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership audit and action plan aligning Snow College with the Department of Workforce Services, local economic development directors, and business and industry employers. Detail on the UCAP project is found in the College's audit report and proposal on file with the Commissioner's Office.

**C. CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FINE ARTS.** This center is embedded in and a direct outgrowth of the region and history of Snow College. The fine arts have a long and well-regarded legacy at Snow College. This legacy is firmly affixed in the vibrant arts community found in the home region of the College.

Perhaps the best evidence of the quality of Snow College's fine arts facilities, faculty, and students is the willingness of The Juilliard School to partner with

Snow College's Horne School of Music. The two institutions have an active collaboration reflected in the annual Summer Jazz Workshop in Ephraim, seminars taught by Juilliard faculty and graduate assistants in Ephraim during the regular academic year, shared faculty members and recruiting efforts.

The College enjoys the designation as an *All Steinway School*. Snow College was the first in Utah and the only school of its size in the world to have this designation. The Horne School of Music is recognized as an accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music and is housed in the Eccles Center for the Performing Arts.

Building on its highly respected two-year degree program and its partnership with The Juilliard School, Snow College will be seeking approval for a unique offering in the Utah System of Higher Education. The proposal is consistent with the growing national trend and Carnegie Foundation authorization for community colleges or junior colleges to offer very limited bachelor's degree programs. Snow College's proposal is for a bachelor's degree in Commercial Music.

Not only does the Horne School of Music enjoy a well-regarded reputation in music education but also has a faculty that brings well-grounded experience in commercial music. As Snow College moves forward as an institution seeking to prepare graduates not only for traditional transfer to four-year institutions, but also to be workforce ready, the opportunity for students to complete their studies at Snow College in commercial music, enjoy real-world instruction and experiences, and enter the workforce job-prepared and proficient is core to the mission of the College. It is also in complete alignment with the System's 2020 master plan.

Approval of the commercial music program will assist the College in fulfilling its traditional junior college mission. The music program is expected to generate more tuition revenue than it will cost. The additional revenue will provide funds to hire needed faculty members in other areas of the College or hire additional academic advisors. Details on the commercial music degree proposal are found in the formal proposal on file with the Commissioner's office.



Complementing the music program at Snow College is the program in Visual Studies. In-depth and on-going assessment of this program has led to the development of a proposed specialized three-year associate degree—an AFA in Visual Studies. This three-year degree proposal is aligned with BFA degree programs within the State system. All substantive elements are in place to offer this program in a quality manner. It is believed that students who complete the AFA degree at Snow College will more likely graduate on time with a bachelor's degree at the transfer institution.

Accompanying these developing educational initiatives is a movement to create an annual arts festival with the communities in Sanpete County. This festival could embody all areas of fine arts and be built on the foundation of The Juilliard Jazz summer workshop. Such a festival would help promote the hundreds of artisans and performers living in and around Sanpete County. This initiative ties all aspects of this Blueprint together—from growing enrollments and efficiencies through increased summer school offerings to community economic development and workforce preparation.



**D. CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN STUDENT LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT.** As has been mentioned above, Snow College has a broad range of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for its students. Its residential environment leads to heightened engagement among students and among students and faculty and staff. These activities lead to more effective educational practices and higher rates of retention and graduation.

This Center for Opportunities intends to capitalize on the connectedness at Snow College and provide enhanced opportunities in student leadership, service, diversity and global engagement.

The first initiative in this area is the College's new Leadership and Service Transcript, which began in 2010. This transcript intends to motivate and document student activities in areas that lead to learning objectives.



It provides students with an official transcript of experiences employers can connect with learning outcomes they are seeking in new hires such as: the ability to connect choices and actions to ethical decisions, teamwork skills



and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse settings, ability to innovate and be creative, cultural diversity in America and other countries and civil knowledge, civic participation, and community engagement and the ability to successfully lead a group in projects.

The second initiative relates to global engagement. The College has seen a decline in its international student population from nearly 10% of the total student body in Ephraim just over a decade ago to less than three percent today. In 2010 the College realigned its international student office into the Center for Global Engagement with a full-time director. The Center has a number of initiatives designed to promote resident student opportunities, with a goal of at least 20% of the 2011 entering freshmen completing a global learning/service experience before graduation. Further, the College has determined to increase the number of international students to at least 10% of the student body.

Since 2007, the College has created formal partnerships with several colleges and universities in Asia and is looking to create more such relationships around the world.

The third initiative is to attract, and lead to graduation, higher numbers of students from



underrepresented populations. The College's current student population is made up of the following: 90.5% white, non-Hispanic; 2.7% Hispanic; 2.6% international students; 2.1% Asian or Pacific Islander; 1.2% American Indian or Alaska Native; and 0.9% Black, non-Hispanic. The College sees the lack of diversity as a weakness it is addressing through its multicultural center, community programs, and recruiting efforts for students, faculty and staff. Approximately 13% of the people living in the College's primary service area are members of these underrepresented groups. The College has established a goal to increase its student enrollments from these underrepresented populations to at least match the local resident population of 13%.

The first Snow College Multicultural Student Center was opened in 2008. Its coordinator was hired to build programs and opportunities to strengthen engagement in Student Life for students from underrepresented populations—with the primary purpose of attracting, retaining and graduating these students. Multicultural student clubs were established and expanded. Early indications show modest increases have been made in the recruitment and persistence of minority students.



**E. CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN HERITAGE AND TRADITION.** Snow College has been preparing graduates for high quality lives and careers in central Utah and across the country since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As the College moves forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it recognizes an obligation to affirm its rich tradition and to be at the center of discovery, celebration, and sharing of the challenges and accomplishments of the colonizers of central and southern Utah. The pioneer heritage is steeped in folklore, architecture, various faiths, differing languages and cultures, and diverse economic pursuits. Snow College is already home to two key components of the Center for Opportunities in Heritage and Tradition: the Traditional Building Skills Institute and the Mormon Pioneer Heritage Institute.

The Traditional Building Skills Institute, founded nearly 20 years ago, offers an AAS degree and an extensive series of workshops. Students learn traditional building skills such as log and timber restoration, masonry restoration, stonework, ornamental plaster, decorative painting, millwork, wood preservation, stained glass restoration, architectural blacksmithing, wood furniture making, and adobe restoration. New topics are added as opportunities evolve. Instruction is primarily skill-based and hands-on, with full appreciation and awareness of the culture and heritage of the project undertaken.





The Mormon Pioneer Heritage Institute is a recent initiative. This Institute had its genesis in the management plan for the Congressionally designated Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area, approved in 2010 by Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar. The management plan indicated a center for the Heritage Area would be located at Snow College.



The Mormon Pioneer Heritage Institute was approved in 2011 and envisions a multi-faced mission: (1) promoting the study and understanding of the role played by Mormon pioneers and institutions in the Congressionally designated Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area, (2) serving as the base for academic programming for the Heritage Area, (3) sharing research with local government partners to assist in empowering communities in the region to conserve, preserve, and enhance their heritage, and (4) assisting in strengthening local future economic development through promoting historical and cultural tourism initiatives. Start-up funding and the hiring of a director have been accomplished. The Mormon Pioneer Heritage Institute is seeking and attaining external funding and partnerships to expand the Institute's presence in support of the four-part mission noted above.



A series of initiatives are in planning stages, including an oral history project, a special collections at the Karen H. Huntsman Library at Snow College, and a possible "Heritage Utah," which will serve as a clearing house and volunteer center for historic preservation and restoration projects state-wide.

As both Institutes garner continuing success in their missions, Snow College will be seeking additional opportunities in the arena of heritage and tradition—in partnership with the citizens of the region. One such opportunity that may evolve is a more focused symmetry between economics and history—a focus on heritage tourism, connecting the many small entrepreneur businesses of the region with tourists.

## CONCLUSION

The *HigherEdUtah2020* plan sets out its big goal, strategic priorities and action plan. Snow College is ready and able to be an ambitions partner, with its sister institutions, in moving the State toward its big goal. Snow College wants to maintain its mission as a junior college. It also wants to fill that mission, as defined by the Board of Regents and Carnegie Foundation. The College also wants to provide maximum opportunities to its students and community. It is an exciting venture and the College will be bringing a series of specific proposals to the Board of Regents for implementation of this Blueprint.

### **Mission of Snow College**

*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.*

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*Snow College strives to  
fulfill its mission by:*

*Honoring its history and advancing its  
rich tradition of learning by providing a  
vibrant learning environment that  
empowers students to achieve their  
educational goals, encouraging and  
supporting innovative initiatives that  
create dynamic learning experiences for  
the college community, and creating  
learning and service opportunities,  
locally and globally, to engage students,  
faculty, staff, and surrounding  
communities.*