Introduction:
In a rapidly-changing global community, higher education institutions must educate students to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, life-long learners and individuals who demonstrate integrity and empathy as they pursue their lives’ ambitions. Capitalizing on our unique environment, Southern Utah University will prepare its graduates to excel in these areas by emphasizing the following core values: Academic Excellence, Community and Social Responsibility, and Involvement and Personal Growth.

Our Heritage:
Through its more than 100 year history, Southern Utah University has evolved from a teacher training institution to its current role as a comprehensive, regional university offering graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and technical programs. From the time of its founding, SUU has placed students first by featuring personalized and participative classes, combined with competent, qualified and supportive faculty, staff, and administration. People of the region look to the University for skill-development opportunities, major academic specialties, outreach services, cultural and athletic activities, economic and business development, and regional archives.

Our Vision:
Southern Utah University will be nationally recognized as a premier regional university where exemplary faculty and staff, personalized learning and academic integrity enable students and graduates to honor thought in all its finest forms and to excel in life.

Our Mission:
Southern Utah University is a comprehensive, regional institution committed to providing an excellent education through a diverse, dynamic, and personalized learning environment.

Our Core Values:

Academic Excellence:
With superior teaching as its centerpiece, academic excellence is the hallmark of Southern Utah University. Highly qualified faculty members promote and encourage critical and creative thinking, participative educational experiences, applied research, and a supportive learning community. SUU is committed to an academic environment that encourages students to develop as scholars and citizens. Assessment of quality and continual improvement are hallmarks of the education experience at SUU.

Community and Social Responsibility:
Essential to the educational process is a sense of “community,” wherein collaboration, diversity, respect for all people, civility and shared governance are cultivated. The University encourages the discussion and exploration of differing views while recognizing the cherished individual freedom to reach one’s own conclusions. Developing the student into productive, responsible citizens involves training and instilling ethics and values and the responsibilities one has toward others.

Involvement and Personal Growth:
Southern Utah University encourages student growth and development by providing opportunities to broaden service, social, and cultural perspectives through campus and community involvement. The University affirms that active participation in extra curricular activities provides a holistic educational experience and helps prepare students to become responsible, caring members of society.
I. Introduction

As Utah’s only public university south of Salt Lake City, Southern Utah University plays a critical role as a comprehensive regional university serving the dynamic needs of southern and rural Utah. Over the course of its 110 year history, it has become an important center for learning, cultural enrichment, economic development and public service.

Delivering high quality undergraduate and graduate education on a residential campus lies at the heart of all that SUU stands for. Southern Utah University has a rich legacy of delivering both top quality and great value to its students in a campus setting that is unmatched for the beauty of its natural surroundings and for its student-centered programs and services. In many ways, the students who come here receive a “private education” experience with small classes, easy interaction with full-time faculty, a strong curriculum and student services more commonly found at leading private institutions.

Southern Utah University is an acknowledged partner to southern and rural Utah communities and embraces its chartered mission as a regional institution. For nearly two decades, SUU has been a leader in serving the policy, planning, and economic development needs of rural communities throughout the state. SUU is also nationally acclaimed as a center for the performing arts. Its cultural and arts education outreach programs cover Utah and extend to several states in the intermountain west.

Southern Utah University’s vision for the future is to build upon its rich heritage and inherent strengths as encompassed within its core mission, thus perpetuating its legacy of educational quality, value, and community service for generations to come.
II. Southern Utah University’s Major Mission/Roles

Southern Utah University has three significant and distinguishing roles within its Utah System of Higher Education mission and charter:

1. *Comprehensive, high quality Bachelors and Masters granting university*

   Southern Utah University, as a Type II Masters College and University, has a Regents defined mission to “offer a wide range of associate and baccalaureate programs, and . . . graduate education through the masters degree.” (R312-5.1)

2. *Residential Learning Campus*

   Southern Utah University is distinguished by the fact that close to 80% of its students are living away from home. One of SUU’s core values is to broaden service, involvement and perspectives through campus and community involvement.

3. *Regional University meeting Economic Development and Rural needs*

   Southern Utah University serves as a comprehensive regional university. . . to enhance economic, technological and cultural development of the communities served.

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III. Summary of the SUU Context in 2007

*A Private School Caliber Learning Environment*

Southern Utah University is defined by its commitment to delivering a superior quality educational experience to its students in a uniquely beautiful residential campus setting. This emphasis on quality is manifested by a distinctive student-centered learning environment and by the high standards of excellence demanded of both faculty and programs at SUU.

Students at SUU discover a learning environment featuring small classes and close interaction with highly-qualified faculty, that emphasizes SUU’s three core values: (1) academic excellence (2) community and social responsibility, and (3) involvement and personal growth.

Several important factors contribute to SUU’s educational excellence. Smaller class-sizes allow for personalized attention – the annualized student-to-faculty ratio for 2006 was 19:1. Eighty-five percent of the classes at SUU are taught by full-time faculty – the highest ratio in the Utah System of Higher Education. Seventy-six percent of the faculty possess terminal degrees and over three percent of SUU’s faculty have been named as Fulbright Scholars.
The quality of education at SUU is amply validated by its successful completion of ten specialized accreditations in the past three years alone, and by Consumers’ Digest recognition as one of the Top Ten nationally among public universities/colleges based on academic quality and economic value. SUU was named a Best in the West College by Princeton Review the last two years and was most recently named to the America's Best Value Colleges for 2007, a distinction only 5% of the more than 3,000 colleges in the nation received.

Southern Utah University students in 2005 had an 80 percent acceptance rate to medical schools (the national average is 38 percent), an 85 percent acceptance rate to dental schools, and 100 percent acceptance rates to accredited veterinary, law, physician’s assistant, optometry, physical therapy, and occupational therapy programs. Additionally, 75 percent of chemistry students went on to graduate school (compared to 17-22 percent nationally), and SUU business students scored in the top 10th percentile on the National Business Field Exam. (See Appendix I)

In terms of student/faculty interaction, student involvement opportunities, and academic excellence, the Southern Utah University experience compares favorably with many of the nations leading private institutions. Students have demonstrated their recognition of the value of SUU quality by supporting a 70 percent increase in tuition over the past six years, and by the fact that SUU has been a USHE leader in enrollment growth in recent years.

Maintaining this remarkable level of quality is one of the biggest challenges SUU faces. The compelling goal of attracting and retaining high quality faculty/staff is currently strained with soaring housing and real estate costs that have doubled in the past two years, and with salaries that are only 83 percent of peer competition. A proactive plan to address these vital needs is essential to sustaining educational excellence at SUU.

**A Residential Campus Focus**

Southern Utah University is noted for its high percentage of resident students and the residential campus experience it provides, giving students not only career preparation but also life preparation. In an era where many of Utah’s higher education students are commuters to school from their homes, close to eighty percent of SUU students live away from home. Campus composition reflects a healthy mix of urban and rural backgrounds. Over 35 percent of the student body comes from the Wasatch Front in northern Utah while 50 percent or more comes from the smaller communities in rural Utah. Between 12 and 15 percent come from out of state – with the largest contributing non-Utah area being Clark County, Nevada.

Students choose to leave home for Southern Utah University because of the impressive quality of campus life and student support they find here. One of SUU’s core values is to encourage student growth and development by providing opportunities to broaden service, social, and cultural perspectives through campus and community involvement. SUU believes that participation in extra-curricular activities provides a holistic educational experience that prepares students to become better members of society.
The hallmark of the campus experience is found at the Eccles Living and Learning Center. This state-of-the-art, apartment style facility provides not only the latest in on-campus living accommodations, but also an active learning environment that includes faculty for academic support, in-house course offerings, conference and tutoring centers, and live-in resident assistants. Additional housing facilities are moving from the planning stages to reality.

Students find a variety of critical support resources and programs to make their campus experience enjoyable, safe, and productive. These include the Student Success Center, Career Services, the Wellness Center, the Service Learning Center, and the Outdoor Recreation Center.

Involvement and personal growth abound at SUU with over 130 student clubs on campus. For the past two years, SUU has led the Utah System of Higher Education in the percentage of students who have registered to vote in state and national elections as well as in the percentage who vote in campus elections.

A Regional University

For over 15 years, SUU has advanced its chartered mission as a regional institution by addressing the policy, planning, and economic development needs of the state’s rural communities through the Utah Center for Rural Life. Southern Utah University is recognized statewide for the flagship role it plays in rural community and economic development.

Over this span of time, the Utah Center for Rural Life has provided both a vision and a voice for rural Utah and has been a driving force for implementing rural initiatives for two gubernatorial administrations. These initiatives include the 21st Century Communities Program, which engaged over 130 communities in strategically planning for their futures, and the Utah Smart Site Initiative, which led to the creation of over 1400 technology based jobs in the rural regions of the state. In delivering these programs, the Center has been a pioneer in developing partnerships for rural progress with such entities as state and local government and other institutions of higher education.

The Utah Center for Rural Life at Southern Utah University continues to be a focal point for rural advancement and advocacy by sponsoring the annual Utah Rural Summit, the annual State of Rural Utah presentation to the legislature, Senator Bennett’s Rural Business Conference, and through the Rural Utah Matters publication. The Center is also a leader in its role as staff to the Governor’s Rural Partnership Board and to the Southern Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC).

A Nationally Acclaimed Center for Performing Arts

As the home of the Tony Award-winning Utah Shakespearean Festival, SUU is a nationally acclaimed center for professional quality performing arts programs. In addition to wooing
audiences from its Elizabethan era stage, the Shakespearean Festival reaches out to educate and capture the imagination of young audiences throughout Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California and Idaho through a number of educational programs such as Shakespeare in the Schools, Elementary Shakespeare Showcase, Shakespearience, and its high school Shakespeare Competition.

Complementing the Utah Shakespearean Festival offerings are four vibrant programs in theatre, dance, music, and art/design. An interdisciplinary MFA in Arts Administration produces skilled leaders for arts organizations nationwide.

**A Sports and Outdoor Recreation Center**

Southern Utah University is well established as southern Utah’s sports destination due to its outstanding athletic facilities, its hosting of such major events as the *Utah Summer Games* and high school state championships, and its exciting NCAA Division 1 Athletic Programs. Additionally, SUU is a significant factor in the Utah sports scene state-wide because of the large number of head coaches that have come through its programs, earning it the moniker of “Utah’s Coaching Factory.”

Southern Utah University’s location in Cedar City places it on the doorstep of some of the nation’s most spectacular natural wonders. In addition to being a gateway to Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Cedar Breaks National Monument, Cedar City is less than a half day’s drive to five other national parks and over a dozen national monuments.

Southern Utah University is capitalizing on its uniquely wonderful circumstance of place by developing outdoor education programs and outdoor recreation programs that will benefit students, residents and visitors to the area. The SUU Outdoor Recreation Center is operational and seeing enthusiastic success. In fall 2006, SUU began offering its Outdoor Recreation Bachelor of Science degree program – a perfect match for its magnificent setting.

**Located in one of the Nation’s Fastest Growing Regions**

Population growth in southwestern Utah is soaring – ranking it as one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. The population of Iron and Washington Counties is currently at 170,000 and growth estimates indicate that these numbers will at least double in the next decade.

Accommodating the educational and community support needs of this burgeoning population will be one of the greatest challenges Southern Utah University will face in coming years. This growth will inevitably demand more programs, faculty and facilities. It will also require a heightened degree of responsiveness on the part of SUU to serve both the demands of the economy/workforce and the growing pains of the regional community.
Meeting these demands will require forward-looking strategies and investments, community partnerships, and enhanced cooperation with sister institutions within the Utah System of Higher Education, particularly between Southern Utah University and Dixie State College.

The SUU Vision Moving Forward

Southern Utah University is planning now to meet the needs of a growing population and to fulfill its vital mission and role within the region, the state, and the Utah System of Higher Education.

SUU’s vision of being nationally recognized as a premier regional university is clearly stated in its mission statement. To make this vision a reality, Southern Utah University is moving forward to continuously improve upon its quality and strengths in academics, as a residential campus, and as a regional university.

IV. Comprehensive Offerings Focused in Six Areas of Strength

With superior teaching as its centerpiece, academic excellence is the hallmark of Southern Utah University. Responding to the myriad demands of a rapidly changing economy and growing population, while still maintaining the core values and mission that make SUU unique, is Southern Utah University’s objective as it moves forward.

Meeting this objective will require an unwavering commitment to faculty and program excellence, and responsiveness to student needs in a changing marketplace. Moving forward, SUU will continue to build upon its six core areas of strength:

1. Business

Southern Utah University has recently completed the nation’s highest business accreditation (AACSB) and features Master degrees in accounting (MAcc) and business (MBA). Performance of senior business students on a nationally normed Princeton exam shows consistent records of 95 to 98 percent over the last seven years.

2. Education

SUU has graduated 300 to 350 new teachers per year for several years and obtained NCATE accreditation in 2003 – the highest in the field. SUU’s largest Masters program is the M.Ed. The newly named Beverly T. Sorenson College of Education and Human Development also includes an endowed chair.

3. Humanities and Social Sciences (Liberal Arts)

All but one of the Fulbright Scholars on the faculty are from the college of Humanities and Social Sciences. It houses the Michael O. Leavitt Center for Politics and Public
Service, and the Leavitt Collection. With over 90% of its faculty holding terminal degrees, the college offers a master in professional communication and is in the final stages of receiving approval to offer a master in public administration commencing in fall 2007.

4. **Performing and Visual Arts**

The Utah Shakespearean Festival is a cultural treasure for Utah and Southern Utah University where it is housed. Bachelor programs are offered in music, theater, visual arts, and Utah’s only accredited dance program, as well as an interdisciplinary MFA in Arts Administration – which has had 100 percent student placement.

5. **Science**

Enrollment growth in science has soared 34 percent in the past four years. SUU is now in the top 100 U.S. schools in dental school placements, and student placements in medicine, pharmacy and veterinary medicine is superb – usually 90 percent or higher.

6. **Technology and Engineering**

SUU is very supportive of Iron County’s strong manufacturing base. SUU’s BS program in integrated engineering prepares generalist engineers for small-sized manufacturing companies. This program was successfully accredited by ABET in its first attempt. Bachelor degrees are also offered in both computer science and information systems.

Southern Utah University’s plans for the next decade incorporate comprehensive offerings in these six areas of existing strength and focus. Central to these plans is an emphasis on adding graduate programs as a natural qualitative progression to SUU’s broad undergraduate offerings.
## Southern Utah University Programs Under Exploration and Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Degree Type</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
<th>Projected for SBR Agenda</th>
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The strength of Southern Utah University goes much deeper than the number of degrees it offers. Its true strength is found in the academic quality of those offerings. The foundation for quality programs is a high quality faculty and a level of institutional support infrastructure that is capable of sustaining academic quality.

One of SUU’s highest priorities in the coming years is to retain key and program critical faculty/staff members, and also to provide greater opportunities for faculty/staff development, which are currently very limited due to budget constraints.

V. Southern Utah University’s Mission as a Residential Learning Campus

Southern Utah University’s distinction as a residential campus is central to its mission and to its appeal. Over two-thirds of SUU’s student body are living away from home. Meeting the health, counseling, and social support needs of these “away-from-home” students unavoidably demands a higher level of institutional resources than are necessary for students living in their own homes and commuting to school. SUU feels a keen obligation to meet these student needs, and to provide a residential campus experience that integrates both career preparation and life preparation.

One of Southern Utah University’s foremost objectives – and needs – is to enhance programs and support for its residential students. To build on Southern Utah University’s core value of enhancing student involvement and personal growth, the university seeks to strengthen its residential campus role by:

- Expanding access to the library and physical education building by lengthening hours
- Providing more support to improve student retention through increased academic, tutoring, employment/minority counseling and advisory services
- Replacing aging housing units (400 beds) with new, high-quality living/learning facilities – and possible additional beds to meet campus growth needs
- Strengthening leadership development and service learning opportunities to enable students to prepare themselves with leadership and service skills and insights
- Increasing the opportunities for student participation with a wide menu of student activities, including additional intramural activities

VI. Southern Utah University’s Mission as a Regional University

Southern Utah University has a clear vision for the unique and critical role it must play as a regional university serving a broad and diverse region. SUU is the region’s only source for graduate level skills delivery. In addition to training a market-ready workforce, SUU’s role is to be a key driver and catalyst for regional economic growth, a partner and resource to businesses, communities and governments, a source of artistic and cultural enrichment for
the region’s residents, and to build regional pride and identity through outstanding sports and recreation programs.

To fulfill its chartered mission as a regional institution, Southern Utah University is pursuing the following objectives with focus and energy:

1. Economic Development and Entrepreneurship Support

   a. Establish a Regional Economic Development Center/Applied Research Center

   This initiative is in its beginning stages, and has a mission to: Foster innovation and job growth in southern Utah by connecting businesses and entrepreneurs to the resources, knowledge, talent and technology they need to succeed.

   A core focus of this Center will be to meet the training, technology and innovation needs of the region’s vibrant manufacturing sector.

   The Center is also working to develop a physical business incubator and to provide a full menu of entrepreneur training and support services.

   b. Develop a USTAR Technology Outreach Center

   Development of a Technology Innovation/Outreach Center in partnership with Utah’s research universities is a natural outgrowth and compliment to SUU’s economic development thrust, and capitalizes upon its strengths in science, engineering, and technology application – all linked to the two-way brokering of new ideas, technologies, and products with the region’s manufacturing and technology businesses.

2. Expand Regional Continuing Education Offerings

   SUU plans to expand the programs it offers through continuing education and to also increase accessibility to its continuing education courses through a variety of means, including the establishment of Continuing Education Centers in partnership with key communities in the region.

3. Be a Proactive Regional Partner and Resource

   Southern Utah University will continue to support the needs of businesses and communities in southern and rural Utah through the Utah Center for Rural Life. SUU’s goal is to be an even better community partner and resource in the future by engaging with businesses and communities through intergovernmental and business roundtables and by facilitating the creation of business networks in the southwestern region. These roundtables are designed to generate two-way exchanges and linkages between SUU and
the region’s communities and businesses in order to be more responsive to their needs and to make university resources more readily available.

4. Expand SUU’s Regional Cultural and Performing Arts Involvement

As the home of the Tony Award Winning Utah Shakespearean Festival, SUU is a nationally acclaimed center for professional quality performing arts programs. In addition to wooing audiences from its Elizabethan era stage, the Shakespearean Festival reaches out to educate and capture the imagination of young audiences throughout Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California and Idaho through a number of educational programs such as Shakespeare in the Schools, Elementary Shakespeare Showcase, Shakespearience, and its high school Shakespeare Competition.

In addition to delivering outstanding educational and cultural opportunities throughout the region, the Utah Shakespearean Festival will be involved in enhancing the rich cultural fabric of the region by making its expertise available to area communities and theater groups by assisting them in the development of their local theater and arts programs and attractions.

5. Build upon the unique Outdoor Recreation/Education strengths and reputation of SUU

Cedar City is the gateway to southern Utah’s world-class scenic and outdoor recreation wonders. SUU intends to fully capitalize on its unparalleled natural setting by developing outdoor education and recreation programs and experiences that will eventually become as nationally renowned as the Utah Shakespearean Festival.

In addition to building upon SUU’s existing Outdoor Recreation Center and Outdoor Recreation Degree program, this cross-disciplinary effort will draw upon the sciences, the hotel management and hospitality programs, and will become an integral part of campus student activity opportunities. Even more importantly, it involves working partnerships with regional tourism initiatives, federal land management agencies, the Utah Stewardship Center, and local and national outdoor recreation industry interests.

6. Build regional identity through Sports and Athletic Programs

Southern Utah University is well established as southern Utah’s sports destination due to its outstanding athletic facilities, its hosting of such major events as the Utah Summer Games and high school state championships, and its exciting NCAA Division 1 Athletic Programs. SUU is also a significant factor in the Utah sports scene state-wide because of the large number of head coaches that have come through its programs, earning it the moniker of “Utah’s Coaching Factory.”
Southern Utah University will build upon its reputation as southern Utah’s sports destination by continued hosting of the Utah Summer Games, state championship tournaments, and a wide variety of other athletic competitions.

Southern Utah University will foster regional pride and identity through its competitive NCAA Division I athletic programs as it positions itself to become a member of the Big Sky Conference. SUU athletics will strengthen region-wide identification with these programs through a broad outreach effort that will involve high schools, community events, media events, and financial aid for regional athletes.

VII. Necessary Resources to Fulfill SUU’s Mission

The scope of SUU’s Strategic Plan calls for a ten-year framework. To fulfill the major mission of the University will require solid and consistent support over the coming decade. The quality of programs and services needed by deserving and talented students must be predictable in order for a sound plan to move into place. The future of the state, citizens’ opportunities, and the health of the state’s economy are all closely tied to strong, vibrant higher education institutions for Utah’s students. Repeatedly, relocating companies from other states first ask about the quality of higher education and public education in the state -- long before asking other questions regarding tax rates, physical climate, and so forth.

In order for Southern Utah University to implement its strategic plan, it is essential that additional funding be provided to cover:

• New and existing academic programs (estimate 4 to 5 new faculty additions per year for ten years)
• Funding support for key instructional needs, academic support services, residential campus needs/services, regional economic initiatives and general institutional needs

Estimated annual funding support required beyond basic salary, O & M, and other existing budget category increases is $1 million per year over the coming decade.

Front end loading of this funding support in amounts greater than $1 million per year would jumpstart the implementation of the plan and would also send the message to existing and prospective key faculty and professional staff that Utah is serious about maintaining higher education as a vital priority. This would be a great message to augur the recruitment and retention of some of the very best people that future generations of Utahans deserve.

VIII. Areas of Collaboration with Dixie State College

Because of their reasonably close proximity, Southern Utah University and Dixie State College in many ways serve overlapping constituencies and therefore have a significant opportunity and responsibility to collaborate and partner together in meeting the educational
needs of these constituencies. There is recognition on the part of both institutions that collaboration and partnering not only leverages scarce resources, but also provides a better level of service to the region’s residents.

Southern Utah University strongly believes that collaboration strengthens both institutions, and that through mutual understanding and coordination ways can be found to allow each institution to expand its programs without harming the other, and without departing from their different roles and missions within the Utah System of Higher Education.

In fact, Southern Utah University and Dixie State College have a long history of collaboration and are currently exploring future areas of collaboration. Recent and on-going collaborative efforts include:

1. SUU delivers Master of Business Administration, Master of Accountancy, and Master of Education program offerings at Dixie State, serving graduate program needs in Washington County.
2. Collaboration occurs in holding shared workshops with students involved in the TRIO program at both schools.

Program partnerships are currently being explored with:

1. A bridge arrangement with Southern Utah University to build a Secondary Licensure Program for Dixie State College
2. A potential long term arrangement for Criminal Justice program offering between the institutions
3. Continued collaboration in meeting the health sciences workforce needs of the region
4. Strong collaboration in economic development issues
5. Partnership in working with USTAR and its Southern Utah Regional Center