Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities
Commission on Colleges and Universities

A Full-Scale Evaluation Committee Report

Dixie State College of Utah
St. George, Utah

October 6-9, 2002

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Commission on Colleges and Universities that Represents the Views of the Evaluation Committee
Evaluation Committee Report  
Dixie State College of Utah  
St. George, Utah  
October 6th - 9th, 2002

Table of Contents

Evaluation Committee............................................................................................................... 3
Introduction................................................................................................................................ 4
Report on the Self Study Report............................................................................................... 5
Standard One - Institutional Mission and Goals........................................................................ 6
Standard Two - Educational Program & Its Effectiveness.......................................................... 8
  Science and Mathematics........................................................................................................... 10
  Humanities and Social Science................................................................................................. 12
  Fine and Performing Arts........................................................................................................ 18
  Computer and Information Technology.................................................................................. 22
  Education and Family Studies................................................................................................. 23
  Health Science........................................................................................................................ 26
  Applied Technology Education (Automotive, Auto Body, Diesel, Apprenticeships and Aviation Flight).................................................................................................................... 29
Policy 2.1 - General Education & Related Instruction................................................................. 32
Policy 2.2 - Educational Assessment.......................................................................................... 32
Policy 2.3 - Credit for Prior Experiential Learning.................................................................... 34
Policy 2.4 - Study Abroad Programs.......................................................................................... 35
Policy 2.6 - Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificates, and Degree Programs....................... 36
Standard Three - Students......................................................................................................... 37
Standard Four - Faculty............................................................................................................. 41
Policy 4.1.................................................................................................................................... 43
Standard Five - Library & Information Resources................................................................. 44
Standard Six - Governance & Administration........................................................................... 47
Standard Seven - Finance......................................................................................................... 49
Standard Eight - Physical Resources....................................................................................... 51
Standard Nine - Institutional Integrity....................................................................................... 52
General Commendations and Recommendation...................................................................... 53
Dr. Jonathan N. Lawson, Chair  
Vice President Academic affairs  
Idaho State University  
Pocatello, Idaho

Mr. Douglas M. Abbott  
Dean, College of Humanities, Social Science/Information Technology  
Montana Tech of the University of Montana  
1300 West Park Street  
Butte, Montana

Mr. Ronald S. Bolstad  
Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Southern Oregon University  
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.  
Ashland, Oregon

Ms. Connie M. Capurro  
Dean of Student Services/Registrar  
Western Nevada Community College  
2201 West College Parkway  
Carson City, Nevada

Dr. Sue Justis  
Medical Biologist  
Flathead Valley Community College  
777 Grandview Drive  
Kalispell, Montana

Dr. James D. Kriley  
Professor of Media Arts and Theatre  
University of Montana-Missoula  
PARTV Room 110  
Missoula, Montana

Dr. Jacqueline C. McCrady  
Retired Director, Library Resources Center  
Mount Hood Community College  
P.O. Box 754  
Manzanita, Oregon

Dr. Barbara J. McNeil, R.N.-BC  
Professor of Nursing/Assessment Director  
Division of Nursing  
Lewis-Clark State College  
500 8th Avenue  
Lewiston, Idaho

Dr. James E. Minkler  
Dean of Instruction for Humanities and Social Science  
Spokane Falls Community College  
3410 W. Ft. George Wright Drive  
Spokane, Washington

Dr. Randy Rhine  
Dean, College of Professional Studies  
Montana State University-Billings  
1500 North 30th Street  
Billings, Montana

Mr. Stuart Savin  
Dean, Math, Manufacturing & Transportation  
Portland Community College  
17705 NW Springville Rd., RC 2/230  
Portland, Oregon

Dr. Susan Schaefer  
Professor, School of Business and Economics  
California State University Hayward  
488 Kentucky Avenue  
Berkeley, California

Dr. Ann Smart  
Dean, Institutional Advancement  
Linn-Benton Community College  
6500 Pacific Blvd. S.W.  
Albany, Oregon
INTRODUCTION

On October 6-9, 2002 the Evaluation Committee representing the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities visited Dixie State College of Utah in St. George, Utah. A team of 13 members, accompanied by Dr. Ronald L. Baker of the Commission staff, evaluated how well the college’s self study analysis matched the realities they encountered. The Dixie State College community extended a warm and friendly reception. From the President and administration to faculty, staff, and students, the people at Dixie were helpful, attentive, and communicative. They were patient with our requests for additional information, clarification, and explanation. The Committee had excellent technical assistance in the workroom and elsewhere on campus. We were highly impressed with the enthusiasm of the students, the frankness and concern of the faculty, and the insights and understanding of the staff.

By the morning of the third day, the Committee was able to agree unanimously on its recommendations to the Commission and on the Commendations and Recommendations which conclude this report.
THE SELF STUDY REPORT

The self study which Dixie State College prepared as part of its preparation for this full scale review gives evidence of wide campus participation in its creation. While it is long and in many cases redundant, it is also a very useful document. Some of the sections such as finance were clear and useful and demonstrated full compliance with the Commission’s standards. Other sections were long on description and short on guidance. Throughout the self study there are very forthright statements regarding where the campus has disagreements with procedure or direction and clear statements about how the campus is moving ahead with due respect to those disagreements.

While much of campus operation was covered in great detail, there were some serious lapses. Standard two, Educational Programs and its Effectiveness, for example, calls for the institution to comment on study abroad programs (Policy 2.4). No such comment on analysis was provided. The evaluation committee, however, found evidence that study abroad - travel study courses were being offered.

Members of the committee expressed some frustration with the online presentation of exhibits and appendices; some of the links were inactive.

In sum, the self study was adequate and the Evaluation Committee was able to confirm the majority of its assertions during the time in St. George.
Standard 1.A - Mission and Goals

Dixie State College of Utah is an institution which is experiencing a sea change in its operational realities. It has had almost exponential growth and finds its facilities and faculties seriously taxed to deliver its services. It has been adapting to the arrival of new educational technologies. It has sought strategies for dealing with the apparent changes in preparation for college of its primary clientele. Increasing regional demands for its services - from demands for additional community college programs, for assistance with economic development, and for an expansion into baccalaureate programs - has led to profound change.

Most recently in 1999 as the Utah Board of Regents redrafted the current mission statement for the institution as part of the State’s master planning efforts, a mission and name change was adopted and Dixie State College of Utah was free to add to its curriculum "select" baccalaureate programs creating a two-tiered institution. The new and current mission statement was subsequently ratified by Dixie’s Board of Trustees -- a group which had been deeply involved in the drafting of the new statement (1.A.1).

The current mission statement is published appropriately (1.A.2). Whether or not the campus community was its chief source, there is ample evidence that the campus is aware of the major changes (1.A.1). The evaluation committee is concerned, however, about how fully the mission and goals are understood by the campus community (1.A.1).

The college has made significant efforts to measure and demonstrate how it accomplishes its mission and its goals (1.A.3). The new mission and goals are giving direction to many of the college's educational activities, including admissions policies for each tier of the institution, to the selection of faculty, and to planning. How the allocation of resources is unfolding under the mission, however, is a cause for concern and watchfulness as there is a clear tension between providing support for the traditional activities and new initiatives (1.A.5).

Recommendation

1. The mission statement was created amidst change that is still unfolding. It is not fully understood by the community, and the internal community was not as fully engaged in its creation as some might hope. The evaluation team therefore recommends that the campus review the current statement to both reaffirm its general content and to make whatever adjustments would make it fully consonant with current institutional realities (1B.3 and 1.B.9).
Standard 1.B - Planning and Effectiveness

Dixie College is engaged in planning on an ongoing basis. At various levels within the institution, evaluation of progress toward meeting goals and fulfilling mission are assessed and published. The Annual Report displays a good number of key indicators drawn from the Core Indicators of Effectiveness for Community Colleges (1.B.1). Below the institutional level, it is less clear that procedures for evaluating how goals are reached are fully in place.

The mission statement indicates a welcome to students of all ages, ethnicities, nationalities, and economic backgrounds. In a campus community that is largely homogeneous, that is important if students are to be prepared for life in a diverse and heterogeneous world. Planning for how to address that portion of the mission could be better demonstrated (1.B.2).

The planning process appears to be participatory, but it is not fully understood by or its results evenly communicated to all constituencies (1.B.3 and 1.B.9). All the same, there is good evidence that at the institutional level evaluations have lead to planned alterations in programming (freshman seminar and sophomore capstone).

Recommendation

1. The Committee recommends that additional attention be paid to planning for a more diverse student body (1.B.2) and that further efforts be made to communicate planning outcomes.
STANDARD TWO - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Standard 2.A - General Requirements

Dixie State College of Utah does fulfill the requirements of this standard. It offers collegiate level programs culminating in identified student competencies leading to degrees or certificates in recognized fields. There is evidence of ongoing evaluation of its programs with an eye to their continuous improvement. Certainly, conditions and needs have changed and the institution is in the process of redefining itself.

The institution is experiencing what much of the higher education faces - declining resources, increasing demand, and a struggle to maintain standards. Dixie seems to be doing its best to provide sufficient human, physical, and financial resources to support its programs (2.A.1). That dilemma at Dixie is highlighted throughout this report. Resources in general are stretched very thin. The committee cites that severally in the text on standard two and standard four. It will require additional resources to address the workload issue, for example.

At the same time, on going and new program areas could be improved through additional services, curriculum expansion, and new staffing. That too, will require additional resources. The committee realizes that with current resources, the college could not possibly address both of these areas completely. They are observed and comments are offered because they are part of the challenge at Dixie College. The committee does not suggest which of the areas needing additional resources should have priority. The Dixie community must address that. The committee asserts, however, that Dixie will need to make choices or find additional resources. Because the college is attempting to fulfill its new mission while addressing its traditional role, a strong case exists for improved state support. More within its immediate control are auxiliary revenues and tuition and fees. Strong efforts to maximize such revenue streams would be appropriate. If the college is not successful in obtaining new revenues, a review of its mission and subsequent adjustment of curriculum and services will be necessary.

Its programs are compatible with its mission (2.A.2) and its degree and certificate programs are of coherent design (2.A.3). The fields of study lead to degree objectives and there are appropriate degree designators consistent with program content (2.A.4). While the institution has not specifically attempted to demonstrate that students in short term or concentrated courses (block courses) have mastered program goals and course objectives (2.A.5), there is a general equation between its learning experiences with its semester hour practices at other institutions of higher education (2.A.6). Summer and block courses do require the same contact hours as regular courses.

The faculty’s role in design and implementation of the curriculum is clear, (2.A.7) but there is a question about the timing of a recent decision to discontinue labs as part of science courses. Faculty do participate in decisions regarding library and information resources (2.A.8) and the institutions curriculum is well planned (2.A.9). Curriculum policies seem to be regularly reviewed (2.A.11) but a serious lapse in both policy and practice has occurred in the discontinuance of an aeronautics program recently (2.A.12).

Standard 2.B - Educational Program Planning and Assessment

On a global basis, Dixie State College of Utah has attempted to assess on an on-going basis
the efficacy of its general education programming and associate level programs through an annual assessment and the Annual Report. The institution has put in place an encompassing process for self examination (2.B.1). Most programs had identified and published program goals and had made some progress on regular and systematic assessment (2.B.2). Although uneven, the institution’s efforts to improve teaching and learning through its assessment activities have improved (2.B.3).

**Standard 2.C - Undergraduate Program**

Dixie State College’s undergraduate program has a long history of providing students with substantial, coherent, and articulated exposure to the broad domains of knowledge. While the institution is moving into a two-tiered program array - associate level and general education and baccalaureate upper division - the whole of the instructional program seems based on a clear rationale and is well designed. Publications give a good picture of the curriculum to be pursued and there is a substantial core of general education in the transfer associate degree programs and the new baccalaureate programs. The associate degree programs designed for career preparation have appropriate general education and related instruction.

The Committee found that Dixie State College’s traditional strengths in two-year programming have continued with exceptional strength in the general education area. Its faculty is adequate to the job (2.C.7); its advising is solid (2.C.5), and its developmental or remedial work is governed by clear policies regarding such matters as the granting of credit (2.C.6).

**2.G - Continuing Education and Special Learning Activities and 2.H - Non Credit Programs and Courses**

The role of Continuing Education is well defined at Dixie State College and is congruent with the mission and goals of the college. Continuing Education at Dixie State College includes the program administration for the Adult Education Program, Dixie State College’s participation in a collaborative online Associate of Science degree in Criminal Justice, Community Education, Conferences and Workshops, The Cultural Activities Program, Distance Education/Online Courses, Institute for Continued Learning, and off-campus educational centers in the community of Hurricane, Utah and the Kane County Educational Center in Kanab, Utah.

It is noteworthy that there is significant collaboration of the Continuing Education operation with the community of St. George. For example, the position of Director of the Community Education unit is funded through Dixie State College, the City of St. George, and the Washington County School District. The Director of Community Education regularly meets with the Dean of Continuing Education, the City Administrator, and Superintendent of the Washington County School District to plan and implement the agenda for Community Education. Community Education plays a major role in the planning and implementation of many of the events held throughout St. George and the surrounding area.

Review and observation indicates that offerings and operations of Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs and Courses are consistent with information presented in the self study and fully meets the Standards 2.G and 2.H. The Distance Education/Online Courses will be discussed more fully under Standard 2.6.
STANDARD TWO, CONTINUED

BUSINESS AND RELATED PROGRAMS

In recent years, there have been several important changes in Dixie State College business programs. For many years, students received a more general associate degree, and lower division transfer requirements in business were recommended by advisement. The new Associate of Science degree in business is a more effective way to aid students in completing those requirements, to enter the upper division program or transfer to other colleges.

One purpose of this accreditation review is to assess the availability of resources for current programs. At Dixie, Associate degree programs in business fields have seen some enrollment declines. Faculty postulate that area employers do not reward possession of that degree, so that prospective students either accept employment without post-secondary study, or seek bachelors’ degrees. They are aware that the availability of the four-year degree may divert students from other associate programs (such as Office Management or Tourism) toward the AS in Business. Continuing attention to associate offerings will be needed, to assure that those programs are current and viable. There was no evidence that these programs are being neglected or stripped of resources to support the bachelor’s degree; rather, the issue is one of student demand.

Business

The four-year business degree received strong support from the business community of the city and county, and that support was demonstrated tangibly through funding. The faculty seem generally enthusiastic about the degree, and students seem to welcome the opportunity to finish a degree in the geographic area. In planning the new degree, Dixie administrators consulted with other Utah state colleges. The resulting curriculum provides convenience in transfer for students, and offers the coursework expected in such a program as well as some innovations (for example, an Ethics course).

The first “track” or option developed was General Management, and a visual technology option has been added to take advantage of student interest and course availability in cooperation with the Department of Computer and Information Technologies. The addition of new faculty is expected to permit creation of other options.

The physical facilities available to support business programs are impressive. The new building contains a variety of classroom configurations which facilitate use of alternative pedagogies. Faculty offices and spaces for student clubs and informal gatherings are ample. The campus computing facilities are up-to-date and available at appropriate hours. Because the bachelor’s programs are relatively new, student advising concerning them is considered important. An advisor for these programs has been therefore been designated, and is readily available.

Librarians have been very cooperative in acquisitions for the new program, and faculty have been active in selecting additions to the collection. Many of these acquisitions, however, seem to be “popular” business books which are written for the general public, and have a short lifespan. Current statistics and current thinking about business issues can be readily found through electronic means. However, deeper background – history, law, or theory, for example – is usually available only in print. As more students reach upper-division level, the focus of acquisition should be on provision of these resources to support their work.
Dixie Business Alliance

With the encouragement of the Business building’s major donor, that building provides space for an innovative campus-business-government consortium, the Dixie Business Alliance. The offices of several federal and state programs which serve the region are located in the building, along with Dixie State College extension programs which serve the business community. Prospective clients can easily be referred to the agency best suited to their needs, the agencies themselves cooperate more than is usually the case, additional channels are provided for reaching the business community for student internships and class projects, and the college is more highly visible in the area.

Commendation

1. Dixie State College is commended for its creation and support of the Dixie Business Alliance, which provides valuable services to the business community in its region.

Recommendation

1. Business faculty members should review current library holdings and their procedures for recommendation of acquisitions, to assure the adequacy, in depth and relevance of the print collection.

SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

The science department consists of biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, and geology. There are twelve full-time faculty – five in biology, five in chemistry (one overlapping with biology), two in geology (one overlapping with chemistry), and two in physics (one overlapping with math and engineering). There are five full time faculty in the math department. Faculty in both departments are well qualified for their teaching assignments: seven have terminal degrees; the rest have masters degrees in the areas in which they teach. Both departments, but particularly math, rely heavily on adjunct faculty. Fortunately, they can draw from a large pool of qualified individuals.

These departments provide courses that (1) meet the general education requirements for the Associates of Arts and the Associates of Science degrees in the areas of life science, physical science, and mathematics, (2) satisfy lower division requirements for a variety of baccalaureate degrees and (3) offer prerequisite service courses for technical programs (e.g. nursing and dental hygiene).

Physical resources for classrooms and offices are adequate. Classrooms dedicated as laboratories are spacious, well lit, and well equipped. No concerns were raised about staff support, media availability, technology, safety equipment, or library support.

Both departments have done program reviews with particular attention given to student outcome objectives in general education courses and to whether or not all courses are preparing students for their next level – whether that be at a four-year institution or in a technical program.

Curriculum content and course changes are faculty driven. Policies are in place which facilitate course evaluations resulting in the retention of needed or the elimination of unneeded courses. New courses are offered after an appropriate procedure has been followed. Course descriptions are submitted to the department chair and approved by the department faculty before moving on to curriculum committee and academic council (2.A.7). Enrollment in general education courses has been negatively impacted since the inclusion of the class Scientific Foundations of
Nutrition (NFW 1020) as a life science general education option. This impact extends to the actual termination of classes offered by the science department.

Many courses in both the science and math departments assign written research papers which require the involvement of both the library and writing center personnel to ensure that the students have the greatest chance for success in completing the assignments (2.A.8). There is a congeniality and mutual respect among the faculty of both departments which is to be envied and certainly commended. As a result of their team concept and spirit of cooperation, they have made great strides in the area of assessment. Assurances that all students meeting the general education requirements in the life sciences, the physical sciences, and mathematics will have had the opportunity to learn common learning objectives is admirable. Questions covering these outcomes are submitted by faculty for use on the sophomore capstone exit test. Students taking classes with math prerequisites are surveyed for success and preparedness, and dental hygiene and nursing students are surveyed as to the effectiveness of preparation in the prerequisite science courses (e.g. BIOL 1030, 1040, 2010, 2020, CHEM 1110, 1130) (Policy 2.2). However, program self studies for the science department do not include the results of these ventures or the departmental responses to the results.

General education requirements are clearly delineated for the Associate of Science, Arts, and Pre-engineering degrees. However, labs for all non-science major courses which meet general education requirements have been dropped for reasons that are not entirely clear. Faculty believe it is due to a disregard on the part of administration for the importance that a “hands-on” experience can play in the general education of students. Administration blames the cancellations on space issues. Regardless, the current 2002-2004 catalog maintains that students must take one science class with a lab to satisfy the Natural Science component of general education. This discrepancy presents a potential issue of misrepresentation.

Historically, faculty members from both departments have recognized their geographic isolation and have made the effort to attend professional conferences. This has been made much more difficult with the current budget cuts and the elimination of professional development funds. This is having a deleterious impact on current faculty as well as the recruitment of new faculty, and it is hoped the administration will restore the availability of these funds as soon as possible.

Both the science and mathematics departments are engaged in faculty evaluations. Faculty seem to pay particular attention to written comments on the student evaluations (which are done at least once at year for all faculty) and both departmental chairs are consistent in doing classroom observations followed by one-on-one feedback with faculty. There is little motivation for the faculty to apply for rank advancement or tenure as there is no incentive. There are varying levels of involvement in the production of individual portfolios, but this is a new component in the evaluation process. Although there does not seem to be resistance to the concept of peer reviews, the procedures are not defined yet and some concern has been raised as to the potential negative use of the peer review by administration.

**Commendations**

1. The faculty of both the science and math departments are to be commended for their commitment to the success of the Dixie State College students as is evidenced by their maintenance of high academic standards within their classrooms and their willingness to “self-examine.”

2. The Math Department is commended for its great example in “closing the loop” of assessment.
Real efforts have been made to look at program effectiveness and to respond to the results of that examination.

3. The science department is commended for the investment of thought, time, and financial resources to provide the best possible laboratory equipment which leads to a positive laboratory experience for the students.

4. The faculty in both departments are to be commended for recognizing the significance of insisting students write “across the curriculum”.

**Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that the science department continue to build on the great start it has made in program assessment by demonstrating that these activities have led to the improvement of teaching and learning (2.B.3).

2. It is recommended that faculty in both departments continue to have dialog about the peer review process and find a procedure that will work in order to encourage even greater teaching effectiveness among the faculty.

3. It is recommended that the lab component of the science general education courses be reinstated or the catalog be amended to reflect the current status.

**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

For the purposes of the accreditation evaluation report, the college organized the educational programs in the humanities and social sciences in three departments: the English Department offering composition and literature; in the Humanities and Social Science Department offering humanities, philosophy, history, western civilization, political science, psychology, sociology, criminal justice, anthropology, and foreign language; and the Developmental Education Studies Department. As a result of the program review process, the faculty members of each discipline were asked to conduct a program review specific to their disciplines. To maintain consistency in that approach this report will address each discipline separately after first making a few observations about the general approach used concerning program assessment for all of the departments organized under the humanities and social science area.

An interpretation of program assessment, required by the Accreditation Standard Two, and more specifically by 2.2 Policy on Educational Assessment, has led Dixie State College to assess disciplines as representing the concept of program. Whereas some might argue that the concept of program entails a unit of study that terminates in a degree or certificate, the interpretation by Dixie State College has allowed for an assessment process to take place discipline by discipline. The problem that does arise when addressing the program assessment issue discipline by discipline in a college the size of Dixie State College is that some disciplines only have one or two full-time faculty members and some have none at all. With faculty workloads exceeding maximum load levels in many cases, with some faculty teaching an excess of 300 students per semester in at least two cases, the burden of on-going program assessment is problematic. Nonetheless, in all those disciplines that had at least one full-time faculty member a program review including program assessment was done.
The curriculum offered in the area of humanities and social sciences serves the Dixie State College Mission in providing developmental courses preparing students for college level courses, provides composition instruction at the beginning and intermediate levels, and lower division courses in the humanities and social sciences providing the community college tier. The second interdependent tier of the Dixie State College Mission, offering a limited number of baccalaureate degrees, is also served with the recent creation of several upper division level courses in English and in multicultural studies.

The educational programs in the humanities and social sciences play a central role in meeting the Dixie State College Mission of helping students establish and expand their worldviews. The area of general education reform is also of notable mention. The faculty members of the humanities and social science educational program areas have been involved in an on-going discussion of general education. This discussion has led to revisions and a continual fine-tuning of the A.S. and A.A. degrees. General education objectives were identified and the appropriate objectives have been included in all the syllabi in every discipline. The result is a coherent design to both degrees. Taken as a whole the offerings in English, humanities and social sciences provide Dixie State College students with an excellent breadth of courses that meet the general education requirements or can be taken as electives. The courses are appropriately sequenced and transfer easily within the Utah System of Higher Education.

Faculty members participate in the design, approval, and implementation of the curriculum through department planning and active participation on the Curriculum Committee. One area of concern that merits consideration is the role that the Academic Council plays in approval of curriculum. The concern is that those having final approval authority may not be faculty members or even those who have any background in curriculum.

Assignments throughout the humanities and social sciences area frequently require students to use the library or other information resources. All students receiving English composition classes experience an orientation on how to use the library.

Faculty members are to be commended for the amount of time they commonly devote to helping their students, despite heavy workloads. Students emphasized how grateful they were for the willingness of faculty members in the area of the humanities and social sciences to take the time to help them outside of class. Students also commented on the fact that even though many of the faculty members possessed doctorates in their fields they always treated the students with respect and made the students feel important and valued.

The English Department and Humanities and Social Science Department share the same facility, the McDonald Center. The building is conveniently located at the heart of the campus making access easy. There is currently enough classroom space although scheduling is pushed to its limits during the morning hours. The classrooms are well furnished with comfortable and appropriate chairs and tables, and most the classrooms are equipped with the latest instructional technology. Faculty offices fall within reasonable size parameters although offices for adjunct faculty often combine from three to five individuals. Secretaries are generally able to combine adjunct faculty in offices in such a way so as to avoid times when more than one faculty member will be using the office. The only suggestion for this building is that necessary steps be taken to furnish it with clean drinking water.
The Developmental Education Department is housed in the Browning Learning Resource Center. The building is also easily accessible to students and is well furnished with computers and appropriate furniture. Faculty offices are conveniently located near the classrooms and tutoring areas.

**Anthropology and Criminal Justice**

Since no full-time faculty are specifically assigned to these disciplines and no program reviews were available, efforts need to be made to make sure that these disciplines do get assessed in some way as long as assessment is done discipline by discipline. Additional offerings in anthropology, or dividing the general anthropology course into two courses, physical and cultural, may be considered providing that a qualified faculty member is available to teach the courses. The criminal justice courses offered do prepare students to transfer into that major at area universities, however without a full-time faculty member accessibility for students to contact their instructors is problematic.

**Composition**

The English Department faculty members are to be commended for their efforts in the area of professional development, grant writing, and program assessment. The faculty members have proven themselves to be adaptive to the new technologies available for computer aided composition instruction and online instruction. They have developed a new upper division class, English 3010, Writing in the Professions, for the new baccalaureate programs now offered at Dixie State College.

As a result of their assessment efforts in composition, the department is encouraged to continue improving the instruction in the areas of proofreading skills, editing, and source integration. Composition faculty members are to be commended for the fact that they have drafted and revised the Critical Literacy Skills Test (CLST) through three major revisions. They should continue to assess and revise the CLST, however, actual revisions to the way composition is taught or how writing is taught across the curriculum may be limited to the heavy faculty workloads that already exist and to class enrollment size in general. Also due to their assessment efforts, the department has determined that the placement process is working well with the majority of students reporting that they were properly placed in the appropriate composition courses.

The department is encouraged to continue its attempt to monitor grade inflation and do what is needed to overcome the problem. The increasing dependence on adjunct faculty in teaching composition may compound this problem. The situation of having eleven full-time faculty members and the thirty adjunct faculty members assigned to teaching composition will need to be examined. With most of the composition courses being taught by adjunct faculty and all of the literature courses being taught by full-time faculty, the Committee suggests that a desirable full-time/adjunct faculty ratio in composition be established. Even with possible adjustments in the way courses are distributed between part-time and full-time instructors the quality of instruction and learning will need to be analyzed if the policy of increasing the adjunct faculty to full-time faculty ratio continues. The policy of mentoring new faculty members in the English department is worthy of praise and the department is encouraged to continue this policy.

Students were very complimentary of the high quality of instruction they received from composition faculty members and how willing they had found their teachers to be in offering them assistance outside of class. The students were quite concerned that the Writing Center had been
Developmental Education

The Developmental Education Department delivers the first goal listed under the Dixie State College Mission and plays a vital community college role in meeting the needs of the community. In forming a foundation for success in either a work setting or lower-division coursework, the department continues to serve a growing need of students who are placed in developmental math, reading, or writing. The department has tracked student success in college level classes after the students have exited the developmental program. With the data gained from this tracking the department has made revisions to their program in response to weaknesses. In response to the analysis of assessments taken in the graduating sophomore survey, elements of reading have now been added to two developmental composition courses, however the Committee suggests that the Developmental Studies Department work closely with other academic departments in order to infuse more reading instruction into other general education content courses. The department is encouraged to continue its excellent communication with the English and the Math departments in providing the exiting developmental students with a smooth transition into college level academic programs.

The Writing Center has been reported as being important for developmental writing students so the college is encouraged to explore ways to maintain this service that was closed the current semester due to budget cuts. With the budget cuts for the current year some developmental classes have been overloaded far beyond the recommended capacity. The impact on the quality of learning needs to be examined closely to determine if this overloading has had significant deleterious effects.

The New Student Orientation course has been assigned to the Developmental Education Department. Although the course serves both as a freshman orientation course and as an important part of the pre-test for general education at Dixie State College, the recent budget cuts have resulted in many staff who are not faculty members being asked to teach this course as part of their job assignment. Although such work assignments may be deemed as cost effective, the institution is recommended to revisit this policy by examining the learning outcomes in those classes where the person assigned to teach the course does not feel prepared or satisfied with his or her teaching assignment. Attention also should be drawn to Standard 2.A.1. regarding the way staff are selected to teach this course.

Foreign Language

The A.A. degree requires two courses of a foreign language and the college offers courses in ASL, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish, however, it only offers a second year in Spanish. The college may want to consider offering a second year in the other languages if enrollment projections warrant it to allow students interested in transferring to upper division coursework in these foreign languages. Students did indicate their frustration with only having one language being offered for a second year of study.

The faculty members in this discipline area are encouraged to continue their work on reducing grade inflation that may be exacerbated by having only one full-time faculty member. The additional tasks caused by the out of proportion adjunct to faculty ratio has added to this full-time faculty member’s already overburdened workload and efforts need to be made to remedy this situation to maintain the high standards in the foreign language disciplines.
The pre-test and post-test assessments for the foreign languages have given the disciplines some important data, however attempts to receive student success data specifically tied to the foreign language from the transfer institutions might also prove valuable.

**History and Political Science**

The two full-time faculty members in the disciplines of history and political science are highly regarded by their students even though each faculty member teaches over 300 students per semester. This heavy teaching load makes it difficult for either faculty member to assign as much writing as they would like in their courses. Students comment that both instructors make ample time to meet with their students and they are to be commended for this. Both are active in professional development in a variety of ways and contribute to their fields. A new multi-cultural course was just developed and taught by one of the faculty members for a new baccalaureate program.

It is suggested that the American History course be taught over two semesters instead of having only one semester available to cover the entire U.S. History. The Committee also suggests that the college consider that the history offerings be expanded to cover more than a U.S. and Western Civilization focus to better meet the Dixie State College Mission of helping to expand student’ worldviews.

The pre-test and post-test assessments in history did provide some quantitative data, however the faculty members did not find it very helpful. The Committee suggests that other more meaningful assessment measures be found that would benefit the disciplines of history and political science. Alumni surveys, components from the sophomore capstone courses, or data on transfer success of history majors at transfer institutions are different means of assessments that could be considered.

**Humanities**

The humanities courses fulfill an important option in the humanities distribution area in both the A.A and A.S. degrees. The courses are taught by very qualified and experienced faculty members who are highly regarded by their students.

The faculty members are to be commended for their scholarship and community service as well as their fine teaching. Students were quick to point out their respect and appreciation for these educators.

A pre-test and post-test assessment instrument was developed for this discipline, however due to new administrative assignments in the last two years for two of the faculty members the assessment cycle was not completed. The faculty members are now encouraged to return to that assessment process.

**Literature**

Dixie State College offers an excellent breadth of literature courses, however the English Department faculty are encouraged to develop one or two more literature courses that direct the focus at more non-western authors. The literature courses are taught almost entirely by full-time faculty. In order to achieve more balance in the department in full-time to part-time ratios, it is suggested that the English Department consider, especially in the case of adjunct faculty who have taught in the department for many years, giving qualified adjunct faculty the occasional opportunity to
teach a literature class. Doing so may benefit the quality of the composition classes as a result.

Faculty members teaching literature are encouraged to continue their fine efforts in program assessment. Although the current assessment technique appears to be working quite well, the faculty members may want to examine the success of their students in achieving other learning outcomes in the future.

The literature faculty are to be commended for their professional development activities with a list far too long to include in this report. Their successful grant writing is also worthy of noting.

Psychology

There appears to be a high demand for Psychology classes and there is some question whether enough sections are offered. The course offerings serve the general education needs for the A.S. and A.A. degrees very well, however two courses are missing if the intent of the student is to transfer as a major in Psychology. It is suggested that the psychology faculty may want to request that information be gathered from the Sophomore Capstone course to determine how many students plan to transfer as psychology majors. If there is a significant number then the creation of a social science methods and a social science statistics course should be developed.

The current program assessment instrument appears to be working well, although transfer success specific to Dixie State College graduates who are now psychology majors at four-year institutions is currently not available. It is suggested that the faculty members begin requesting that information on a continual basis in the hopes that someday the baccalaureate institutions will someday make that available.

It is suggested that the college examine possible redundancy in course offerings between Psychology 1100 and FCS 1500. Where course redundancies do exist they do detract from institutional efficiency. The psychology faculty members have done a good job of maintaining academic standards and have kept grade inflation under control.

Sociology

The course offerings in sociology allow students an appropriate selection in pursuing either their A.S. or A.A. degrees. The courses correspond well to courses offered at transfer institutions and other Utah community colleges.

One weakness of the department is that nearly all of the courses are taught by one faculty member. During the current semester all of the courses are in that category. Such a situation gives students little or no options if that particular instructor’s teaching style fails to match with the student’s learning style.

Although assessments were done on the courses as a response to preparing for accreditation, the sociology faculty member is encouraged to reflect on other meaningful ways to assess the discipline. Requesting information on students who transfer into sociology programs at the major transfer baccalaureate institutions might result in actually obtaining that information in the future.

With grade point averages in sociology falling within one standard deviation of the Dixie State
College average, the faculty member is encouraged to continue efforts to guard against grade inflation.

It is suggested that the college examine the possible redundancies that may exist between courses offered in sociology compared to those offered in the Family and Consumer Science Department.

**Commendation**

1. The Committee commends the faculty of these departments on their high quality of instruction and their responsiveness to student needs.

**FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS**

The Department of Fine Arts is a Department of fine and performing arts and communications. This combination is an inheritance of past traditions and political convenience, but for various reasons it may be both logical and advantageous in fulfillment of Dixie State College’s stated mission and its future programmatic developments.

The Department serves approximately 600 students and does so with thirteen full time faculty members and approximately twenty part-time adjunct faculty positions.

**General Requirements**

In accordance with the college’s mission to provide “core content knowledge”, “basic skills and knowledge that broadens and enriches student’s lives”, the Fine Arts Department fulfills its responsibilities. The Fine Arts and Communication programs play an important role in the overall mission of the college in as much as they contribute significant course offerings to the basic General Education requirements for all students, and also because they provide specific areas of study and opportunities that will develop students who have unique abilities for aesthetic expression and communication.

The Fine Arts Department at Dixie State College is composed of five general areas of emphasis: Art, Communications, Dance, Music and Theatre. Each area of study offers students a series or sequence of courses designed to give them the basic knowledge and foundational skills requisite in each area of emphasis for both an Associate Degree, and entree to an institution of higher learning for continued work in the field.

The Associate Degree offerings with their various areas of emphasis reflect a coherent design and are academically sound with one exception. The Theatre program as listed in the catalogue offers a special Emphasis in Technical Theatre, and although there is a faculty member who has the credentials and expertise to offer this special emphasis, there are presently no courses approved or in the catalogue that provide the students with the opportunities they need to achieve it. The Technical Theater courses that are listed are basically workshop courses that are intended to give any and all students who are interested in working on a production credit for doing so and these courses lack the content as well as the opportunity to acquire skills necessary to prepare the student for continued work in Technical Theatre.
The Associate Degree offerings with their commensurate areas of emphasis are clearly defined and articulated in the catalogue.

The catalogue also clearly states the General Education and program course requirements for all areas of emphasis and faculty have appropriate credentials as well as expertise to provide the students with the essential knowledge and skills they need for the degrees offered.

Facility Resources

The Arts: Sufficient and appropriate facilities for most of the programs’ educational needs are presently in place or are firmly committed to by the institution and the Board of Regents. The recent approval and support by the Board of Regents for a new Performing Arts Center (to be completed in August 2004) will resolve most of the serious dilemmas. With this new seventeen million dollar addition, Theatre and Music will finally be in a facility that can support the academic and artistic needs of both programs.

The Art program is presently housed in a renovated space. Which was well conceived and provides the program with ample space that suits its needs well. The Art program will also gain a new gallery in the new performing Arts Center.

The Dance program is the newest in the Department and it is small. Presently, it has suitable space to serve its educational needs.

Communications: In this area there are greater facility and space needs. The Mass Communication – Movie Production program is presently without a designed and designated space for its academic training. There are needs for a sound stage and a mobile production unit. Likewise, the Radio Production program needs a larger space that is specifically designed for educational purposes.

Financial Resources

All programs in the Fine Arts Department indicate concern over the college’s present financial cut backs and although they feel fortunate to have survived the most recent budget cuts, they are clearly worried about future budgeting. Appropriate levels of funding for equipment, materials and staffing are presently insufficient and need to be addressed by the institution. Between the development of new baccalaureate degrees and a statewide cut back environment, programs are worried that they will not be sufficiently funded to take care of the basic educational needs of equipment, staff and production support.

Human Resources

It is clear that each Program within the Department of Fine Arts is confronted with stresses caused by the existing budget limitations and the addition of new baccalaureate degrees now offered at the college, but the central resource dilemma in the Department of Fine Arts is the faculty and the strain being placed on them. It is a devoted faculty and the students openly express their appreciation of them. They are doing work over and above any expectation of them. (Several are teaching 18 to 21 credit hours a semester in addition to their production work and academic activities with their students). They care for the students and they wish to serve them and to develop their programs at
the same time. The perception is that if they can keep enrollments up, money and support will soon follow. Although this is a normal scenario for increasing support, the present conditions and future budget projections cast doubt as to whether the formula will yield success.

Additional faculty are needed full time or adjunct to teach courses that faculty are presently teaching in order to sustain the offerings of the many emphases the faculty believe integral to their students needs. Theatre needs additional teaching support so that the existing faculty can develop the Technical Theatre degree curriculum and offer it to students. The Mass Communications – Movie production emphasis also needs additional support, if this new program is to realize the expectations placed on it when it was approved. The needs are referred to because they are negatively affecting the academic quality of these programs at present.

Curriculum

The faculty in the Department of Fine Arts are integrally involved in designing, altering and implementing the curriculum for their programs and degree offerings. There is an established campus wide process in place that monitors and assesses the efficacy of proposed courses and degree offerings. Likewise, policies and procedures are established and utilized for adding and deleting courses and programs.

Library Resources

The library holdings are sufficient in meeting the educational reference needs of the undergraduate, lower division degrees offered in the fine arts and communications areas.

Educational Program Planning and Assessment

It is apparent that academic program planning and assessment are a relatively new undertaking for the various programs in the Department of Fine arts. The Program Review documents for each of the units demonstrate that in the spring of 2002 an assessment took place. The instrument that was created for the assessment process was a test that essentially sought student opinion regarding their perspective of the arts and a survey designed to see if they had garnered some basic understandings and knowledge while at Dixie State College. It was a beginning, but it does not reflect an understanding of the importance and value of a well-designed assessment process.

The individual units in the Department of Fine Arts completed and developed syllabi for each of their courses. The format addressed the course objectives and for the most part the objectives were stated with sufficient detail that specified “Expected outcomes”. The syllabi also revealed that students would be “Tested,” “Quizzed,” “Write papers” and so on. These are traditional ways of assessing student learning and as such are fine. However, they do not go far enough. “Tests”, “Quizzes” and even “Papers” do not necessarily tell us, what a student knows, but what they have studied to feed back to you. They do not tell you if they have gained ownership over the theory, concept or idea because you cannot see if they can use it in a meaningful way. When we can use something effectively, we have learned it.

What is apparent is that the faculty of the Department of Fine Arts either do not fully understand or are not fully invested in a well designed assessment process which would benefit their students and quality development of the program.
The Department of Fine Arts developed a program assessment plan, but it does not appear to have been created by the faculty, nor does it get into the critical assessment process that can be meaningful in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the individual units. We are expected to assess our students in each and every course they take; however, we are also expected to assess our programs and one of the ways we do this is by seeing what is being achieved by our students. What are they able to do and what are they unable to do? Often we gain a perspective of the quality of our program and its effectiveness by the successes and achievements of our students. These various assessment processes are linked and often give us the clearest understanding of our quality as a program.

An on-going assessment process can be accomplished by continued portfolio reviews with meaningful feedback and dialogue; recurring auditions with immediate feedback; frequent recitals with accompanying discussion and response; video recordings and analysis of student performances; mid program reviews; final concerts, final recitals, performances, showings and so on. These are a few examples of what faculty already use, but if designed as an integral part of assessing each student’s continual development and growth, they provide a much clearer picture of what has really been learned and what has not. Full faculty review of such processes teaches us what we do that is effective and what is not.

General Education

The various degrees offered by the programs in the Department of Fine Arts subscribe to the General Education requirements defined by the college and are clearly stated as part of the degree requirements in each of the emphasis areas.

Summary

The Degree offerings in the Department of Fine arts are essentially sound and meet the standards set forth by the commission with the exception of the Technical Theatre emphasis course offerings (note recommendation below). The faculty are competent and deeply committed to their programs and their students. The students are equally devoted to the faculty and its programs. The facilities are headed in the right direction and significant progress has been made. Improving the quality of the teaching and learning experience is at the heart of all teachers’ work, but this is especially true at this institution because teaching is the central responsibility of all faculty. Therefore assessment, review and improvement are essential to quality teaching. The college and therefore the Department are in transition. Transition means change and change is seldom an easy process for institutions. Transitions afford, if nothing else, an opportunity to re-examine and re-invent ourselves. The Department has incredible opportunities with its new leadership, its new programs, its new potential for growth and integrated-programs. It is clear that these programs play an important role in the needs established by the central mission of the college in this challenging time of development and that these programs need the care and attention they deserve.

Commendations

1. Through commendation we applaud the outstanding outreach activities of the Music Program. Through the performances of the Student Orchestra, the Student Chorale and their cooperative performances with The Southwest Orchestra, the Music program has served the college and community well. Through these successes the southwest Orchestra and the Music Program have become a cultural center piece for the arts in St. George.
2. Through Commendation we applaud the excellent work of students and faculty in the Mass Communication Program for their outstanding documentary production: “The Mountain Meadow Massacre”. This documentary received two Tele Awards for education and historical excellence.

**Recommendation**

1. In accordance with Policy 2.A.3 of the Commission on Colleges and Universities, it is recommended that the Department of Fine Arts and the Theatre Program design, seek approval and implement a series of technical theatre courses that offer students an appropriate body of knowledge and the requisite skills sufficient to prepare them for the Associate Degree with and emphasis in technical theatre presently listed in the catalogue.

**COMPUTER AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The Computer and Information Technology (CIT) degree program is one of the three baccalaureate degrees recently approved on the Dixie State College campus. May 2002 saw the first 17 graduates from the four-year degree program and 21 students are set to graduate in 2003. The CIT degree has three areas of emphasis, Computer Information Systems (CIS), Computer Science (CS), and Visual Technologies (VT). The CIT degree program is patterned after a similar program at Utah Valley State College. When compared to the curriculum at other schools that offer similar degrees, the CIT curriculum at Dixie State College lacks courses in the areas of discrete structures, digital design, physics, and advanced math. However, the addition of courses in the visual technology and computer information systems areas result in a degree that is differentiated from other schools and serves a niche that the college faculty identified. The interdisciplinary baccalaureate curriculum is coherently designed using the two-year CIT degree as a foundation. The four-year program has enabled the college to “retain” its top students by offering them the opportunity to continue their pursuit of a bachelor’s degree at Dixie State College rather than transferring to another institution for degree completion. The CIT degree program has an outcomes assessment plan and two of the three emphasis areas, VT and CS have their own individual goals. The CIS emphasis has yet to have goals as it was only recently approved.

Sufficient physical, human and financial resources exist. The faculty is highly qualified and very excited about their program and students. Six full-time-equivalent faculty and one adjunct faculty member provide instruction for the approximate 55 students enrolled in upper division courses. There are approximately 150 students enrolled in the two-year program. The facilities (both classroom and lab) at Dixie State College are excellent. The computer labs are state-of-the-art from both a hardware and software perspective. Budgets are developed through a “bottom-up” process in which departments present their needs to the division dean and then budgets are developed through a competitive process. This process seems to work well and the department heads interviewed by the Committee indicate that they are content with the process. Students and faculty indicate that the library resources are more than sufficient. The skill set required within the CIT curriculum is better served by the use of journals and online databases within the library rather than the historical library “book.” As one instructor pointed out, by the time the book hits the shelf, the technology described in the book is outdated.

The strengths identified by the CIT department in the institutional self study were evident when the evaluation committee came to the Dixie State College campus. The faculty, facilities and personalized nature of instruction within the CIT program are all combined to provide a positive
collegiate experience for the college’s students. The Committee also confirmed the weaknesses identified in the self study during its visit. Workload, salaries, and professional development issues were identified as were overload concerns and the difficulty of hiring new CIT faculty.

Now is an exciting time at Dixie State College. The faculty are very excited about offering bachelor’s degrees in three areas. However, with this excitement comes some hesitancy or reluctance on behalf of some faculty. Dixie State College has a long and successful history serving its role as a community college in southwestern Utah. The community college culture is well established on the campus. New faculty have been hired in support of the four-year degree and cultural differences between a two-year mentality and a four-year mentality are evident. For example, the college has historically used a public-school-like salary schedule. However, the salary schedule has been abandoned in certain instances for new hires because the college had to pay “market” or “near market” salaries in order to hire new faculty within the departments that offer a four-year degree. This two-tier faculty structure is considered demoralizing by some. Also, the issue of workload was a concern to faculty in the four-year degree area.

Some faculty expressed the concern that Dixie State College must not lose sight of its heritage as a community college while other faculty view the addition of baccalaureate degrees as an opportunity to expand into other bachelor degree areas that may be desired by the community.

Commendation

1. The CIT faculty is extremely dedicated to ensuring the success of the baccalaureate degree. They are also very dedicated to their students and the commitment by faculty and staff to student learning is laudatory.

Recommendation

1. In light of the relatively new baccalaureate degree, the areas of mission congruence, assessment, and faculty workloads should be reviewed and revised as needed. The Committee also recommends that new faculty be involved in departmental discussions.

EDUCATION AND FAMILY STUDIES

The Education and Family Studies Department includes the new Elementary Education baccalaureate degree program, and individual courses in Family and Consumer Science, Health, PE, and Recreation and pre-education. The Family and Consumer Science (FCS) courses include three that meet general education requirements. Scientific Foundations of Nutrition meets the general education requirement for Science without a lab component. Both Family Relationships and Human Development Across the Lifespan meet the general education requirement for Social Science. Health, PE, and Recreation (PEHR) no longer are required general education courses, but there are students who intend to major in this field upon transfer and the enrollments are good in the classes even though they are not required. FCS has been in a variety of divisions over the years and has recently merged with the other areas to make a new department.

Financial, human and physical resources appear to be adequate to support this department. There is concern about the current budget situation, but over the years the faculty have felt adequately supported. Students expressed a need for tables and more space in the Elementary Education cohort program. Elementary Education has added a faculty member per year and is
planning on a fourth faculty member being added next year to reach their desired strength. They currently have a part-time advisor serving SUU and Dixie students. There was an expressed need for another contracted faculty in nutrition. Besides being approved for general education science credits, it is also required in several of the allied health programs. The department is running 7-8 sections per semester with 45 students per class. This is the course with the greatest number of adjuncts teaching in the small FCS program and only one contracted faculty member qualified to teach. The faculty and students would also like to add an Early Childhood Education program to meet the community needs for mandated credentialing of Headstart and Early Intervention staff and to support the new Elementary Education program. There appear to be adequate classrooms, faculty offices, labs and generous PE facilities. There is a preschool classroom with observation windows. It includes an outdoor large motor area right off of the classroom. This lab supports the child development classes and could support an Early Childhood Associate Degree program.

Library assignments were a part of all the courses including PE. The faculty felt supported by the library staff and were pleased with the resources available to them and their students. There were two technology enhanced “Smart” classrooms in the Family and Consumer Sciences Building and the faculty were using the technology in their instruction. In Elementary Education, the students were being taught using technology and are expected to use technology in their presentations.

Faculty were able to clearly articulate how their programs fit with the goals listed with the Dixie mission. The Elementary Education degree program is developed on a cohort model so all the courses are scheduled in sequence for the students at one time. The local school district has been involved in the development of the program which includes educational outcomes to meet the local needs.

Faculty in all the areas were clearly the leaders in the design, integrity and implementation of the curriculum. They all understood and could articulate the policies and process for adding, modifying, or deleting courses and programs. They drop courses that do not have sufficient student demand and add sections of courses or design new courses that do. Faculty appear to use their budget resources for sections wisely. Their objectives are written as measurable outcomes. Courses meeting general education requirements have common objectives written by teams of faculty across the campus followed by specific objectives for the individual course. There are also some statewide objectives written by faculty representing all the state institutions for selected courses in nutrition and family relations. These courses were given a common statewide course number. Dixie faculty participated in that effort. Adjunct faculty were involved in a recent redesign of the nutrition course including its objectives, instructional materials, and assessment activities.

The self study listed four overall outcomes for FCS, but they are not published anywhere else and most faculty were not familiar with them. There has been no attempt to plan assessments for these goals. FCS supports students wishing to transfer to a four-year FCS degree program plus general education and student interest courses. The lack of specialized degree or certificate programs makes it difficult to do assessment beyond the individual course level or the common general education objectives. The same was true for PEHR. However, the PEHR faculty did know the program outcome, but wasn’t sure yet how they would assess it.

In the pre-education core courses, passing College Algebra is a prerequisite for the required elementary education math courses. The state requires College Algebra to be licensed. This program makes sure the students have this requirement met early in their program. The students must pass the basic skills math test with at least an 85% to pass the 2020 course. Otherwise they fail the course and
cannot be accepted into the Elementary Education program. Some students with advanced math credits expressed the desire to be able to challenge the test and not have to take the Math 2010 and 2020 courses.

Elementary Education has been heavily involved in curriculum design which includes outcomes. There is a transition occurring between the former SUU program and the new program. The program has created a model called D.E.S.E.R.T. to reflect the characteristics that effective teachers possess and continually develop throughout their careers. The local school district was involved in developing this model. One of the components is diversity which includes meeting the local need for more elementary teachers to have an ESL endorsements. The program also incorporates NCATE standards and Utah licensure requirements as part of their outcomes. They plan to publish these outcomes on their website. Students upon graduation and presentation by the college of their credentials to the state, will qualify for a Level 1 license. There are 3 clear assessment points planned in the program. Students who meet the prerequisite core classes and GPA, go through a group interview process and an extensive application in order to be accepted into the cohort. At the end of the junior year each student will present a portfolio and defend it in an interview before being allowed to move onto their student teaching year. At the end of their student teaching they will present their completed portfolio and do a final defense of it. The final interview and portfolio review will include local district personnel. Upon passage of this and a positive evaluation of their student teaching, they will be recommended to the state for licensure.

Faculty felt involved and invested in advising. At times, concerns were expressed about the advising center not always knowing what students really need and in what sequence to take courses to reach their educational goals in the shortest amount of time. They did respect the individuals in the advising center, but felt they knew some of the transfer requirements in their disciplines better. They seemed pleased with the new required Freshman orientation course especially when the students were directed to them as advisors. Elementary Education has insisted on having their own advisor who stays current on the licensure changes and will guide the students through the licensure process and paperwork including that required by the State from the college. The advisor is currently part-time, but the need for her work will increase as the program grows and produces seniors.

Faculty evaluation includes regular student feedback, portfolio for self-reflection, administrator observations and feedback. Peer input is still in the developmental process across the campus. Adjunct faculty participate in the student feedback process and observations by the department chair.

Commendations
The Committee commends Dixie State College for:

1. Having an enthusiastic faculty in this department. They enjoy teaching and are concerned about keeping the curriculum current. Student learning is important and course objectives clearly express what students are expected to learn.

2. Having collegial relationships within the department which includes a variety of disciplines. Adjuncts are included and feel a part of the department. Faculty are involved in the Senate and important committees outside of the department.

3. Providing excellent facilities. They are clean and attractive. There is current equipment and technology available. However, tables could be added to the Elementary Education classroom.
4. Reaching out to the community and articulating with other institutions of higher education.

5. Regularly and systematically evaluating adjunct faculty including departmental chair observations of teaching.

6. Building an elementary education program to meet local needs while still planning to meet national standards. Local district personnel are involved in the design and implementation.

7. Designing strong program outcomes for Elementary Education with several assessment points.

**Recommendation**

1. The Committee recommends that Dixie State College make provision for the specialized Elementary Education Advisor to have enough time to work with pre-education majors, upper division students, and seniors preparing for licensure. This includes keeping current on state requirements, forms, and providing the documentation for each student needed to receive their level 1 certificate. (Standard 3.D.10)

**HEALTH SCIENCES**

**2.A - General Requirements**

2.A.1. Through interviews and an examination of meeting minutes and program-specific self study documents, there is evidence of sufficient human, physical and financial resources to support the Health Sciences programs and achievement of student program objectives. The department is now housed together in an impressive renovated building that is very well equipped with current and comprehensive resources. Faculty members are anticipating a new Health Sciences building as well as the completion of a new medical center. Both are expected to expand clinical opportunities for faculty and students.

Although there are sufficient resources to support the Health Sciences programs, there are pervasive concerns from faculty and staff regarding the increasing reliance on adjunct faculty; the increased workloads for faculty, directors, and clerical staff; decreased state funding for the institution; and the intense competition with the private sector for health professionals who are in high demand. Currently, there are faculty turnover concerns in nursing with the vacancy of the Director of Nursing position and one faculty position; the Dental Hygiene Program is requesting additional faculty due to high workload demands; and the Emergency Medical Services program continues to rely heavily on adjuncts. The ADN and PN programs will complete an evaluation visit by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission as they simultaneously pursue program accreditation. The department is addressing solutions to faculty workloads and turnover and considers the situation to be somewhat transitional and temporary.

There is a lack of understanding regarding the structure of the Health Sciences department. The department director’s title, the duties associated with a job description for this position, and the department director’s relationship to other directors and chairs within the institution are confusing to
department members. As the institution prepares to hire a new Director of Nursing, it is suggested that communications with the Health Sciences department be undertaken to clarify matters.

Faculty members view the institution as very supportive despite heavy workload requirements and reductions in travel and professional development funds. The institution is providing resources for the new Director of Nursing to obtain the doctorate degree and through grants will support two current part-time faculty members in obtaining coursework leading to a masters in nursing degree.

As the Health Sciences Department continues to expand in student numbers and in new program offerings and as faculty workloads and academic expectations increase, the department will need to carefully monitor how these factors affect faculty and program quality. The department may face greater challenges in attracting and retaining sufficient numbers of qualified faculty, supporting professional development activities, funding of faculty salaries, and maintaining physical resources such as the dental hygiene clinic.

2A.2. There is strong evidence that the goals of the Health Sciences programs are compatible with the institution’s mission. Program-related missions are congruent with the institution’s mission. In light of the institution’s revised role and mission, there is interest from faculty, program directors, students, and the community in establishing new baccalaureate degree programs for the dental hygiene and nursing programs and in adding new certificate programs. Faculty and staff are experiencing the dilemma of how to balance the excitement of new growth and change with the overall goal of maintaining the quality of current programs. It is evident that the delivery of quality programs is especially important to the Health Sciences Department. Faculty members expressed a full commitment to providing capable, qualified graduates who will meet the health care needs of the community.

2A.3, 2.5 and Standard 2.B Educational Program Planning and Assessment

In a review of curricular plans and course content, it is clear that the Health Sciences Department delivers degree and certificate programs that clearly demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.

Program planning and assessment is a major strength of the Health Sciences Department. Although newly developed in some programs, comprehensive systematic plans of evaluation are effectively utilized for evaluation of program elements. Department minutes, Advisory Board minutes, self study documents and interviews with faculty, staff and students clearly reflect a department strongly committed to self-assessment and continuous quality improvement.

Achievement of expected learning outcomes such as pass rates, employment rates and employer satisfaction is laudable. The PN Program has had a 100% pass rate on the licensing exam since its inception. The first graduating class of the AND programs also achieved a 100% pass rate on the Registered Nurse licensing exam. The Dental Hygiene Program is in very high demand, is well-respected in the community, reports 100% employment rates upon graduation, and continues to hold a national reputation for high quality.

In interviews and written documents, there is clear and strong evidence that assessment activities at the program level lead to improvement of teaching and learning. Health Sciences faculty members consistently and thoroughly demonstrated a central role in planning and evaluating their educational program and basing program changes on assessment findings.
Students, faculty, course syllabi, and library staff validated the consistent use of the library and other information sources for faculty research and student learning. In the library, students reported conducting bibliographic searches, using interlibrary loan, and accessing video, paper, and electronic resources. There is evidence that students have isolated suggestions to improve library services and other resources. It is suggested that library personnel consider developing innovative partnerships such as with the local medical center to share library resources. As funds for library resources decrease in response to changes in the economy and state budget allotments and as plan evolve for continued growth, the importance of finding adequate funding for health sciences resources is heightened.

2.A.4 Degree designations are consistent with program content. In examination of course syllabi, there is evidence in all nursing, dental hygiene and emergency medical services courses of clearly defined learning objectives, content to be covered, methods of inquiry, career preparation competencies to be mastered, and evaluation methods. In the paramedics program one syllabus lacked sufficient grading criteria.

2.A.6 Health Sciences programs appropriately equate learning experiences with semester credit hours.

2.A.7 In interviews, full time and part-time health sciences faculty validated their major role and responsibility in the design, integrity, and implementation of the curriculum.

2.A.8 Health sciences students use the library frequently to complete required course assignments, to meet as study groups, and to complete team projects. In selected coursework, students are oriented to the use of the library and how to conduct literature searches using both paper and electronic sources. Changes in library processes and collection holdings occur based on student and faculty satisfaction data and with active faculty participation. Library staff validated faculty participation in building, maintaining, and evaluating the health sciences collection.

2.A.9 Health sciences programs are planned for optimal learning and accessible scheduling. Before nursing courses are scheduled, it may be advantageous to collaborate with selected general education faculty to optimize student access to non-nursing courses.

Standard 2C. Undergraduate Programs in Health Sciences

The Associate of Applied Science Degree programs and all certificate programs except the Surgical Technician program appropriately include general education related instruction in communication, computation, and human relations. It is suggested that the department re-examine the Surgical Technician curriculum and include coursework in human relations and computation. Program requirements are published clearly and completely in the general college catalog and available in student handbooks.

There is strong evidence of effective program advising by faculty within the Health Sciences Department. Students are highly satisfied with academic advising and general information provided by individual Health Sciences faculty and staff.
Commendations

1. The Committee commends the Health Sciences Department for its exemplary work in educational program planning and assessment.

2. The Committee commends the Health Sciences Department’s faculty and clerical staff for its spirit of cooperation and its energetic efforts to meet the needs of students in a period of change and transition.

3. The Committee commends the Health Sciences Department for its commitment to providing the region with high quality programs in dental hygiene, nursing, community training, and paramedics/emergency medical services.

4. The Committee commends the directors within the Health Sciences Department for promoting a positive work environment and effectively implementing change in a period of transition.

5. The Committee commends the faculty and staff for excellence in student advising.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the library develop innovative partnerships to share in current and future funding of health sciences resources. (2.A.3)

2. The Committee recommends that the health sciences department director’s title, job description, and line of authority be clearly delineated and publicized. (2.A.1)

3. The Committee recommends that the Surgical Technical certificate program be analyzed and revised in accordance with requirements of the general education-related standard. (Policy 2.1)

APPLIED TECHNOLOGY
AUTOMOTIVE, AUTO BODY, DIESEL, APPRENTICESHIPS AND AVIATION FLIGHT

The areas of the Applied Technology Education department contain: Automotive, Auto Body, Diesel, Apprenticeships and Aviation Flight. These comments are made after careful review of the self study, the supporting documents in the resource room and faculty, staff and student interviews.

The self study, program literature and the recently published catalog claim that the automotive program is NATEF (National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation) certified, yet the NATEF certification expired last July. (Sec 9.A.2, 9.A.3) The documentation in the self study also claims that students must complete tasks in the Automotive, Auto Body and Diesel programs before they are allowed to take the ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) exams. This information is inaccurate; anyone at any time can register for these independently administered tests. (Sec. 9.A.2, 9.A.3) The institution reports moving aggressively to reestablish its accreditation status, and given its 10-year history of NATEF accreditation will likely be successful. Nevertheless, the institution’s self study reports that the program is accredited and catalogs and program materials still in circulation could easily (although not purposefully) mislead prospective students.

General Requirements
The programs provide quality instruction in their respective areas (General Requirements 2.A). Without a question, the programs are focused at serving the mission of the college. This was evident from the interviews and material reviews. For the most part, the programs are set up in clear, coherent and concise manner. Currently a number of the curricula are under revision and review and in one case, are awaiting the results from a recent specialized national certification visit (9/02) for their re-certification, which had expired last April. The Automotive and Automotive Collision program facilities appear to be reaching their limit for capacity given the current enrollment. The apprenticeship program has recently moved into a new space that is meeting their needs. Their Apprenticeships curriculum matches the state and federal requirements.

The institution has no contractual relationship with DXATC (Dixie Applied Technology College) for some of their training. DXATC is located across the street from Dixie State. Some of the training conducted by DXATC for Dixie State includes the Diesel program. This is training for which Dixie State College awards credit, yet the training agency (DXATC) is not a college credit granting program, and they are not regionally accredited. While this is not a requirement, given the fact that the contract between Dixie State and DXATC does not fully comply with A-6 (sub sec. C and D) of the accreditation standards, this raises an issue. The vagueness of the arrangement and lack of clear and understood oversight conflict with Sec 4.A.1, 4.A.5, 4.A.8, 2.A.1, 2.7.A, 2.A.11 and 2.B. Apparently, no one knew where the oversight and administration of the Diesel program rested. Dixie State allegedly claims it as one of their programs and represented it accordingly in the college literature, yet DXATC runs the Diesel program and claims ownership. Assessment of the program must be done by Dixie State (A-6 c. d.) Yet it appears to be done by DXATC since Diesel is their program. There is a director split between Dixie State as a vocational director and a president’s position at DXATC. It appears that split role/oversight and the split identity between Dixie State and DXATC leads to some confusion and lack of follow through on processes. DXATC also pays the instructor’s salary through an arrangement with Dixie State. The instructor is full time at Dixie State College but is shared (1/3 at DXATC, 2/3 at Dixie). The curriculum seems to have been created at Dixie State, but is used at DXATC and there is no clear record of it being approved through the appropriate channels and curricular committees at Dixie State College. (Sec. 2.A.11) There were no syllabi on file for the courses, but once requested they were provided.

There could be better cooperation between the Technical programs and the library to incorporate the use of library resources within the technical programs. (2.A.8)

The Apprenticeship program(s) instructors have partial involvement in the development and creation of curriculum. Given the fact that the curriculum is controlled at the state level, this partial involvement is a strong plus for Dixie State. There is, however, no record of these curricula having been approved by the academic council or curriculum committee at Dixie State, yet credit is given for these courses. (Sec. 2.A.7 and 2.A.11)
Aviation program

A state mandate requiring flight programs to be self supporting would have required the college to quadruple the tuition in the program. The college chose to close the program in the Spring of 2002. Students were notified of the program closing one month prior to its end in May. From the information the Committee was able to gather, this closure left approximately 12 students without a program in which they could complete their training. After a lengthy investigation, the Committee found that there were no formal arrangements made to facilitate students’ completion of the program. Admissions office records show that new students entered the program in the fall of 2001. In the following spring (2002), they were told to hurry up and finish by that spring, 2002, or they would not be able to complete their program. According to Dixie State staff, there was supposed to be a contractual arrangement for a “teach out” plan locally. This claim was not substantiated. Everything was done informally to the detriment of the students who were in the program. Failing to find formal documentation on teach out provisions, the reviewer requested that the departmental secretary type a list of the plans. With that document, class rosters and transcripts as evidence, the committee member interviewed students, the instructor and vice president. The document typed by the department secretary at the committee’s request listed three planned options for students – 1) continue private training at the colleges expense and take other courses needed to graduate; 2) transfer, if seeking a 4 year degree; or 3) if close to graduation, continue training through the summer even though the term had ended. The committee member’s interviews with student and the instructor revealed that some students were able to transfer and some were not. Some students attempted to continue through the summer and some students drifted away in frustration. The vice president confirmed that the situation was not handled appropriately. There was nothing set up formally to accommodate a “teach out” and the one or two months notice for program closure was not enough for a “teach out” on a full program. (Std. 2.A.12).

Assessment

For the most part the programs are documenting continual assessment of their students and the program. Student surveys are used to assess the classes and instructors. Some peer evaluation (but not a lot) is used to evaluate instructor performance. However from interviews with the faculty it was unclear as to how this process worked with part time instruction, of if this even occurred for part time instructors (2.B).

Discussions with faculty regarding “institutional assessment” revealed that there was not wide understanding/participation in the process at a level beyond the program specific information (2.B.1). A number of those interviewed did not express an understanding/participation in the larger picture institutional assessment process.

Learning “outcomes” were clearly evident throughout the Automotive and Diesel program. In the collision program, learning outcomes are evident in the documentation for the program; however, they are not evenly addressed or communicated within the program.

In the apprenticeship program there were no “syllabi” available for review, and no published learning outcomes for the programs were found.
All of the programs except the apprenticeship program have an identifiable core of general education courses in their certificates and degrees. Most programs also offer an option for transfer track for the students if they desire it. The policies for these are clearly laid out in the course catalog (2.C).

**Commendations**

1. The Committee commends the ongoing assessment of students in the Automotive and Diesel program as excellent. The Automotive program is supporting an actual engine building class; this is rare these days but essential to student interest and employer needs.

2. The Committee commends the Collision program’s strong dual enrollment program with the local high school.

3. The Committee the Apprenticeship programs for meeting the growing needs of the building and construction industry.

**Recommendations**

1. The Committee recommends clearer lines of responsibility and understanding between programs that operate at DXATC and Dixie State in respect to: Policy A-6 sub part c and d and Std’s. 4.A.1, 4.A.5, 4.A.8, 2.A.1, 2.A.7, 2.A.11 and 2.B.

2. The Committee recommends more faculty participation in the institutional assessment process, specifically relating each programs own assessment activities to the overall instructional/institutional assessment process, including how it can benefit each program and the interplay between program and institutional assessment, and the use/distribution of learning outcomes. (Std. 2.B. 1, 2, 3)

3. The Committee recommends published learning outcomes for the Apprenticeship programs. (2.B.2)

4. The Committee recommends a formal procedure for facilitating the closing of a program and a formal teach out plan. (2.A.12, and Policy A-13)

5. The Committee recommends that information regarding specialized accreditation/certification be accurate. (9.A.2 and 3)

6. The Committee recommends that claims about industry standard test eligibility requirements be verified and actual. (9.A.2 and 3)
2.1 – GENERAL EDUCATION & RELATED INSTRUCTION

The General Education program is central to the mission of Dixie State College and, as such, it is an extensive and comprehensive set of course requirements that provides the student with “core content knowledge” (reading, writing and mathematics); and “distribution content knowledge” that intends to broaden their minds and perspectives in order to prepare them for a fuller and more meaningful life. These General Education requirements are rooted in the intention to prepare students for future study and experiences by providing them with a strong liberal arts educational foundation. The Associate of Science Degree requires 36 semester credit hours of General Education and related instruction courses and the Associate of Arts degree requires 42 semester credit hours.

These General Education requirements offer the students a substantial and coherent program of General Education courses that are clearly articulated in the catalogue and taught by faculty that are appropriately qualified. The Dixie State General Education requirements introduce the students to the content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: the humanities, the fine arts, the natural sciences, language and the social sciences, as well as reading, writing and mathematics.

The requirements were cooperatively developed by the faculty and administrative staff and serve as the heart of all its Associate Arts Degrees.

The Associate of Science degrees fulfill the area of related studies and incorporate along with several of the General Education requirements: Computation, Communication and Human relations.

In conjunction with the general education requirements, Dixie State College has recently initiated a Freshman Orientation course and a capstone course both of which are required for all students. The Freshman Orientation course is taken the first or second semester upon entering the institution and the capstone course is taken prior to graduation. The orientation course is intended to prepare the student for the college experience and to ensure that they are appropriately placed. The capstone course is expressly designed to assess the knowledge, skills and outcomes expected as a result of the General Education courses and experiences. These are both too new to tell if they are fully effective instruments for placement of the student and assessment of their achievements in General Education.

2.2 - EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The institution has goals that accompany its mission. It uses the 14 indicators identified in Core Indicators of Institutional Effectiveness for Community Colleges (Alfred et. al.) as a basis for their outcome assessment efforts. An annual report is prepared by the Institutional Research Office reporting on the results that the institution received with the measurements they developed for each of these indicators. The results include comparison data from prior years. Each indicator is assigned to an administrator. Progress is periodically discussed at the Executive Cabinet as part of this annual process. When the results are finished for the indicator, the assigned administrator writes a section on Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Plans for Improvement. The President reads the entire report and grades Dixie State College’s results for each of the indicators. He includes in his review whether or not they followed through on their prior year’s plans.
As a part of the assessment process, incoming students are tested on critical literacy skills during the freshman orientation class and again during the sophomore capstone class. These results are compared to see if there was improvement. Other surveys also occur in these two required classes to obtain data for some of the other indicators.

Additionally, there is an Assessment Plan for five instructional goals listed with the Mission Statement. Various strategies are in place to measure progress toward meeting these goals. Departments write program outcomes based on the goals and conduct assessment on them in addition to having measurable course objectives and appropriate assessments that feed into their program outcomes. Some departments are further along in this process than others and some have more buy-in than others. The Committee saw excellent progress in some programs. Successful departments are using the services of the Institutional Research Office to develop measurements for their outcomes and have made changes based on the results.

Departments across campus worked on common objectives for General Education which could have common assessments. There are questions on the surveys taken in the Freshman Orientation Class and the Sophomore Capstone class related to the general education objectives to see if there has been change.

Departments with defined degrees and certificates appear to be the furthest along in the outcome definition and assessment process. Having students take more that one course in their department make this process easier to define.

**Commendations**

1. Developing measurements for 14 Core Indicators that fit the college’s mission and goals; producing longitudinal data and analyzing it for strengths and areas for improvement; developing plans for improvement; grading their results; and publishing it in the Annual Report shared with the Trustees and the campus.

2. Having an Institutional Research Office to support the annual report effort including improving the data collection and presentation on a yearly basis. Additionally, using this office to support faculty as they develop program and/or departmental outcome research is strengthening the teaching and learning process.

**Recommendation**

1. There is still work to be done at the program and course assessment level. Efforts should be directed at facilitating a dialogue among programs and departments with strong assessment efforts and those that still need help to address the use of assessment activities to improve teaching and learning. (Standard 2.B.3)
2.3 - CREDIT FOR PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

This Standard appears to be met.
2.4 - STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Although the self study listed no study abroad programming, the Committee was surprised to find that a travel study program advertised for spring was not mentioned here on under standard 2.G – Continuing Education and Special Learning Activities.
2.6 - DISTANCE DELIVERY OF COURSES, CERTIFICATES, AND DEGREE PROGRAMS

The distance delivery of academic programming from Dixie State College is best described as modest at this point in time. On the web site presenting the online program of Dixie State College there are 12 online courses produced by Dixie State College faculty and 12 courses presented on the web site that may be included in the Travel Systems Certificate or Travel Systems Applied Science Degree that originate from Travelcampus.com, a private company based in Colorado. Dixie State College hosts the online courses produced by its faculty on a WebCT server. The online courses in the Travel Systems program are accessed via Dixie State College’s home web page and connect the students to the Travelcampus.com server. The online courses developed by Dixie State College faculty include courses in the fields of art, chemistry, computer information systems, criminal justice, English, and human development. The online Travel Systems courses are on a variety of travel industry related topics.

The online Travel Systems courses are presented in the 2002-2004 Dixie State College Catalog as course equivalents for on-campus courses in the Travel Systems Certificate and Travel Systems Applied Science Degree. The online Travel Systems course equivalents may be completed for up to 17 credits of the 21 credits of Travel Core Required Classes in the Travel Systems Certificate or Applied Science Degree. In addition, Dixie State College participates in a collaborative online degree program in Criminal Justice through a consortium agreement with other institutions of higher education in Utah.

Dixie State College has many elements in place to support the distance delivery of courses, certificate, and degree programs. The college has developed policies on faculty compensation, a course delivery platform has been developed, and online program development is referenced in planning documents for Continuing Education and Information Technology. Further, Dixie State College has entered into a contractual relationship to adopt content and provide an online course delivery platform for courses in the Travel Systems Certificate and Applied Science Degree programs. Though modest in scope at this point in time, the college is clearly using telecommunication technology to deliver instruction. The self study of Dixie State College references all of the above mentioned online instructional efforts, however, the discussion of these efforts is not in the context of the requirements presented Standard 2.6-Policy on Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificates, and Degree Programs, Accreditation Policy A-2-Substantive Change, or Accreditation Policy A-6 Contractual Relationships with Organizations Not Regionally Accredited.

**Recommendation**

1. Therefore, and consistent with the United States Department of Education rules, the Committee recommends that Dixie State College conduct a review of its distance education program through the submission of a Substantive Change related to distance delivery of courses, certificates, and degree programs as indicated in Standard 2.6, Policy A-2, and Policy A-6.
STANDARD THREE - STUDENTS

Dixie State College provides programs and services to support the achievement of the institution’s mission and goals by contributing to the educational development of its students. Student programs and services are consistent with the educational philosophy of the institution. The Committee recognizes the stress placed on employees during economic hardships and although students understand some of the budget cuts, for the most part they report that seamless services that have been provided in spite of the budget cuts. “Caring” and “helpful” were consistently used to describe Student Services personnel.

The Committee found Student Services personnel to be well qualified and highly knowledgeable. Assignments are clearly defined, although recently several staff members have taken on additional teaching responsibilities to support first year student success and to mitigate negative consequences resulting from budget cuts. Their willingness to accept the additional duties demonstrates a high level of commitment to students, but it also increases the workload for departments that are already operating with a lean staffing pattern.

Student Services facilities are situated in convenient locations that are easy for students to access in a “close to one-stop” arrangement. Managers in the areas are knowledgeable and supportive of staff. The Committee found substantiated evidence from several areas of the college regarding the accurate, efficient, and caring services students receive from the Dixie State Student Services employees.

Students actively participate in not only activities, but also in the decision making process at Dixie State College. It is clear that with $100,000 in athletic gate ticket sales, students and members of the community support athletic events. Student government members organize college events, attend those same events, and advocate for services that impact students. One example of their advocacy is their articulation of a need for Saturday library hours after recent budget restrictions caused the library to close on Saturdays (3.A).

Institutional data reflects the accuracy in student characteristics, including students identified with special needs. Admissions and Records and the Office of Student Financial Aid maintain confidential online student records. Hard copies of transcripts, applications, financial documents, and application materials are scanned by college employees, and reviewed before the hard copies are shredded. All student employees take FERPA training and operate under those guidelines. Records are confidential and secure.

Student publications are consistent and honest, although the Committee did question at least one assertion of program accreditation and the accuracy of the statement, as well as the lists of science courses stated on the catalog pages titled General Requirements for Degrees (pages 34-36 of the 2002-2004 Dixie State College Catalog). There is a question as to whether all science courses listed as lab courses are actually providing a lab.

The college mission, admission requirements/procedures, students rights and responsibilities, degree completion requirements, course descriptions, fees, refund policies, and other items relative to academic and financial integrity are available, accurate, and easy to locate. Additionally, on-going
evaluation of Student Services departments, services, programs, and employees is supported by the documentation provided (3.B).

Transfer credit is accepted from accredited institutions. The transcript evaluator and the graduation advisors provide students with accurate evaluations. The current staffing pattern seems to work well for both the Advising Office and the Office of Admissions and Records. This type of cooperation was witnessed throughout Student Services. Several departments share staff and equipment. By pooling resources, departments were able to purchase a scanner, which would have been cost prohibitive for one department. Students and staff benefit from this type of cooperation (3.C).

The institution provides services to support student achievement. Admissions and records policies are adhered to and students have the right to appeal decisions. All students interviewed on campus were aware of the scholarships and financial assistance programs offered at Dixie State College. A freshmen orientation course, required for all students, emphasizes the available Student Services at Dixie, as well as behavioral habits required for student success. Students enrolled in the course are required to create portfolios containing information regarding majors, career searches, advisement materials, placement test scores, and graduation requirements. This course, designed to enhance the college experience and taught by many Student Services employees, was given mixed reviews by students interviewed by the committee (3.D.9).

Students with special needs are welcomed in every program at Dixie State College. Special programs are funded by TRIO grants. A Disability Specialist assists students with physical, learning, or emotional disabilities. Tutoring assistance is available for all students, although depending on the need; budget realities may limit the number of tutoring hours available for students. Interviews conducted with faculty substantiated a cooperative working relationship between Student Services personnel and the faculty. Several Student Services employees sit on the college Academic Council (3.D).

Dixie State College offers a reasonably priced food service program, with plans for an expanded program. The staff is friendly, courteous, and helpful to students. The facility is bright and comfortable. The fact that it is in close proximity to the bookstore, student government, and other services is once again in the favor of students.

Dixie students are pleased with the Student Bookstore. Prices are reasonable. Textbooks are available as required and students report the Bookstore will order materials that are not in stock. The staff is sensitive to student needs and supportive of student activities. The Dixie student newspaper is available college wide. Students have an understanding of the institution’s relationship to student publications (3.D).

On-campus student housing is designed and operated to enhance the learning environment. Recent upgrades in the residence halls, which include painting to brighten the student rooms, new carpet, furniture in the student lounge area, new beds, and some enhancements to the laundry rooms, create attractive living spaces for Dixie students. The management of the residence halls is responsible and knowledgeable. The rules and responsibilities for residents are clear and concise. Students agree to follow the rules when they enter the contractual agreement. The halls provide a safe and competently staffed living area, which is located close to the library, student center, and
classrooms.

It is evident funds collected from students are being spent to improve the student living conditions. Although not all upgrades are completed at this time, long range planning is being used to complete the upgrades (3.D.13).

Dixie State athletes abide by intercollegiate rules and regulations. Student admissions, grades, and success rates are collected and reviewed as required. Athletes are held to the same academic standards expected of other Dixie students. The duties of the Athletic Director and Coaches are clearly defined, and the budgets are open for review. Although salary records indicate higher salaries for male coaches than female coaches, the longevity at the college explains those differences. The college attempts to provide equity between male and female sport teams. Facilities and practice fields for both genders are excellent.

Athletic teams are not without controversy. There is some concern across the college that team sports take money from instruction, but it is very clear Dixie students support both the male and female athletic teams. Students interviewed indicated the importance of the team sports in raising school spirit, providing exciting school events, and presenting additional opportunities for students to excel. Dixie College recruiting materials market team sports, as well as the wide variety of academic programs and student activities. The Committee saw examples of cooperation between the Director of Athletics and other Student Services Managers. These cooperative working relationships, under the direction of the Vice President of Student Services, once again promotes the higher likelihood of student success (3.E).

Dixie State College promotional materials accurately and factually depict college policies, procedures, requirements, and responsibilities. Consistent and honest information in the college publications support academic and financial practices at Dixie State College.

In conclusion, Dixie State College has a strong and progressive Student Services Division. The Vice President of Student Services and the President of the college have provided support and leadership that motivates employees and encourages professionalism. Employees in this division display a high level of knowledge, commitment, and professionalism. The division is staffed with a group of “self-starters.” With limited space, lean staffing, and restricted budgets; the division is doing an excellent job of providing services, programs, and information to students.

**Commendations**

1. The Committee commends the management and staff of Student Services for the high level of knowledge, professionalism, sensitivity, and commitment to student success.

2. The Committee commends the student government association for the active and responsible role it assumes in the leadership, advocacy, and service for the student body.

3. The Committee commends Student Services for the high degree of cross training and availability of staff for students.
Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends the college consider providing the necessary additional technical support for the software enhancements (BANNER) scheduled for implementation during the next year (3.A.4).

2. The Committee, while commending the institution and its staff for creatively providing the necessary instruction for **SSC 1000: New Student Orientation**, suggests the college recruit other part-time instructors to accept those responsibilities. This will help ensure reasonable workloads for all Student Services employees (3.A.4).

3. The Committee recommends the Student Services staff study the hours of operation, and recommend a plan that will be in the best interest of students. This may or may not include a plan to provide evening hours for students (3.B.6).
STANDARD FOUR - FACULTY


The faculty is well prepared for their roles as teachers at Dixie State College. From the information provided by Dixie State College, and the data acquired during the site visit, during a recent academic semester, Dixie State College utilized 92 full-time and 214 adjunct instructors to deliver courses. According to the self study, thirty-four full-time faculty and 22 adjunct faculty had doctoral degrees. Fifty-two of the full-time faculty and 80 of the part-time faculty had master’s degrees. A majority of the terminal degrees come from three Utah universities: Utah State, Brigham Young, and the University of Utah.

As evidenced through faculty and staff interviews and information from current program-specific self study documents, Dixie State College’s programs are staffed with professionally qualified faculty. Faculty members are teaching in content areas appropriate to their credentials or expertise. Certain departments draw from a relatively large pool of qualified individuals as adjuncts while other programs report difficulty in recruiting adjuncts. For example, the departments of math and science report relative ease in hiring adjuncts due to the tremendous pool of individuals with expertise in their field.

It is evident through interviews and committee meeting minutes that most full-time and part-time faculty are participating in planning, curriculum development and review, academic advising and institutional governance. The faculty senate, whose membership is voluntary, has been influential in faculty salary and benefits negotiations, and has promoted advances in faculty academic excellence, professionalism, and new faculty orientation. Curriculum revisions are almost entirely faculty driven.

In numerous discussions within a wide-range of departments on the Dixie State College campus, faculty workloads were an issue. While most faculty interviewed by the Committee considered the workloads to be typical of a community college, there was significant concern about a number of classes being taught by staff that may not be qualified and/or are teaching in addition to their full-time jobs. The committee notes that the college vests the decision on teacher qualifications in the chairs of the departments. Newer faculty within the four-year programs expressed concern over the faculty load and the lack of time to perform research due to the heavy teaching loads. The Dental Hygiene Program reported difficulty in recruiting adjuncts that generally can earn much higher salaries in private settings. Dental Hygiene Program members further report a “dental education drought” in the country and anticipate difficulty in finding dental hygiene educators in the future. The nursing program is aware of the current shortage of 1678 nurses in Utah and more acute shortage facing the nation in the future. Dixie State College is addressing this situation through such things as allowing faculty to “spread” their teaching loads over the entire year (i.e. – including summer semester).

Low faculty salaries are a concern of faculty in all the academic departments on the Dixie State College campus. Low salaries and heavy workloads are problematic and have directly influenced the ability to attract diverse and qualified candidates. As an example, the Nursing Program, conducting a search for the Director of Nursing position, has lost two of the four candidates due to salary concerns. The Dental Hygiene Program faculty reports difficulty in competing with the
private sector. There is also a disparity in the salaries of those faculty teaching at the “two-year community college level” and those teaching the baccalaureate level courses. Dixie State College has long employed a public-school salary model. However, recent hires received starting salaries that were more “market” based than previously utilized. One faculty member called the resulting “two-tier” salary structure which has been approved by both the faculty senate and the trustees “demoralizing”. The benefits package seems to be adequate.

Full-time and adjunct faculty within certain departments report that they are being evaluated on a relatively regular basis. In interviews, faculty reported performance evaluations based on multiple sources of assessment including self, peers, supervisors, and students. In certain departments, faculty could clearly articulate the assessment process and the relationship of performance evaluation assessment findings to improvement of the program. However, other departments’ faculty report that evaluation happens on a case-by-case basis. One department reported that only certain members of the department are using the portfolio process and that there is no evidence of peer evaluations being done. Standardization of the evaluation process is a concern for a number of faculty.

There are processes in place for recruitment and appointment of full-time faculty. Faculty are sufficiently oriented to policies and procedures upon employment. Committees with faculty representation take an active role in the screening and interviewing process. Dixie State College has lost preferred candidates due to the tardiness in completing the selection process and the lower-than-average salaries.

Faculty report sufficient freedom to voice concerns and to participate in the governance of the department and institution. It is evident through meeting minutes and departmental interviews that full-time faculty in a large number of departments participate in department and institutional decision making activities. Adjunct and part-time faculty report ownership and a strong commitment to their departments. In a number of academic departments, there is a sense of “teamwork” and an appreciation of the process that allows for effective departmental communication and the ability of the departmental members to effect department changes based upon faculty and student input.

4.B - Scholarship, Research, and Artistic Creation

As the self study identifies, the professional culture of the Dixie State College faculty has changed with the addition of three baccalaureate degrees. Historically, Dixie State College faculty have been engaged primarily in teaching, and the college has expressed little expectation that faculty members pursue scholarship, research, and creative endeavors, or develop the professional associations that attend such tasks. With the addition of the baccalaureate degrees, the historic emphasis on teaching will be complemented, not replaced, by a growing emphasis on scholarship. As new faculty are hired to support the upper level courses, consideration of their scholarly pursuits should be considered.

Consistent with institutional mission and goals, certain faculty such as the health sciences faculty are engaged in professional development activities. Clinical practice experience is valued and full time nurse faculty may receive release time of two days per month to engage in clinical practice. Several nurse faculty have applied to stipends from the institution for reimbursement for graduate
education coursework. Faculty were aware of policies and procedures regarding scholarship and professional development.

**Recommendation**

1. As demand had increased without a complementary increase in resources, faculty have responded by taking on overloads and additional assignments. These additional burdens have exceeded the point where high standards of teaching and learning can be sustained. There are too many instances where there is not sufficient time and support allowing for professional growth and renewal (4.A.3).

**4.1 - FACULTY EVALUATION**

The institution has a responsibility to provide evaluation of temporary and permanent faculty. The Dixie State College self study asserts, “All faculty, both full- and part-time, will report that their teaching is consistently evaluated.” Interviews with faculty in most all of the academic areas substantiate this assertion. However, certain faculty report that the evaluation process is not consistently applied across the campus. Evaluations in the areas of student, administrative, peer and self occur in most departments, but once again faculty report that the evaluation process is not consistently applied and that the results from the evaluation process are sometimes not returned to the faculty member. The self study indicates, “Evaluators may sense some unevenness in the ways that faculty evaluation is implemented.” The accreditation team did, in fact, discover the aforementioned phenomenon.

Faculty also report that since evaluations are not tied to tenure or promotion decisions, they do not carry “weight.” Tenure decisions as well as advancement in rank are not compensated financially. Faculty stated that evaluations are important to identify weaknesses and can be used in the awarding of professional development dollars. However, other faculty indicated that since the salary process was not tied to tenure or promotion decisions it was not worth their time to apply.
STANDARD FIVE - LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

5.A - Purpose and Scope

The Library staff understands and supports the college mission and purpose, has developed a library mission statement that is well articulated with the college statement, and strives to build collections, access and services in support of the college goals. There are sufficient information resources in holdings and access to holdings through consortial arrangements to support the college’s varied two-year degree and certificate programs, and, to some degree, its new baccalaureate programs (5.A.1).

The library provides an excellent selection of electronic databases and other electronic resources. While the majority of electronic databases and journal subscriptions are provided through Utah Academic Library Consortium (UALC), the continued state support for this service seems assured. It is crucial to the access to information for students and faculty at Dixie State College that this funding for access be retained as there appears not to be a plan for college support for funding this access. It is suggested that the college and library administration consider a contingency plan for funding these resources if state support for this access is not forthcoming.

The current book and periodical collections are sufficient for a two-year community college and support the curriculum, while the non-print collection is better than average. The book and periodical collections in the subject areas of business, information technology and elementary education - areas of the new baccalaureates - are currently receiving focused attention in collection development funded through the Dixie Foundation. Continued attention and funding will be needed to bring these collections and supporting materials to the baccalaureate level of content depth. These collections are not sufficient at the present moment to fully support upper division work. It is recommended that the college continue to build these areas within the library collections while maintaining support for the entire spectrum of materials which underpin its two-year programs (5.A.2). In addition to its main St. George campus, the college offers instruction services and materials at its Hurricane and Kanap Centers. Library services for these students are covered by the library’s policies for distance education (5.A.3).

5.B - Information Resources and Services

The library’s book collection is currently organized using both the Library of Congress and the Dewey Decimal Classification systems and while this divides the collection into two separate entities, it does not seem to prove a burden to user access. The library staff has a long term goal of complete retrospective conversion to the LC Classification system of all materials in its collections and is encouraged to continue with its plan as staffing and resources allow (5.B.1). Evidence within the self study and interviews indicate the library staff takes an active role in providing library use instruction to the students of Dixie State College. Composition courses at all levels require library research instruction while faculty in other disciplines are encouraged to work with the library staff to develop appropriate library instruction within their course requirements. In addition the library staff offers two credit-bearing self-paced courses to students who wish further instruction in access skills.

The library was a well equipped, technology rich classroom devoted to library instruction with class sized student groups. The college and library staff is commended for their efforts in
library and information use instruction, but the demand and need for upper level and more sophisticated instruction should be expected and encouraged by the library staff in the college’s baccalaureate programs. This will increase the workload and pressure on the library staff. It is suggested that the college and library staff recognize and plan for this additional instructional need (5.B.2).

Interviews with library staff and faculty indicate that faculty input into collection development decisions is sought and used in the selection of collection materials. As the college fully implements its upper level coursework and baccalaureate programs, faculty input into materials selection and collection development will become even more critical. Faculty and library staff are encouraged to work together in development of upper division support collections (5.B.4). The college has been pro-active in providing adequate network, computer lab and communications technology to faculty and students. The new 300 seat Smith Computer Center is a good example of this College commitment, and the college is to be commended for its efforts in this area (5.B.5).

**Standard 5.C - Facilities and Access**

The library facility is a well planned, accessible, and comfortable facility for the students and faculty of Dixie State College. Its infrastructure is adequate to provide for newer technologies, and cooperatives agreements have been established which are documented and provided Dixie State College students and faculty with access to many additional resources which complement the library’s basic collection (5.C.1-2).

**Standard 5.D - Personnel and Management**

While staffing is currently adequate and extremely well trained, the college may need to consider additional staff in support of its upper division needs. Also the question of faculty status for the professional staff should be addressed. The need to encourage collegial communication with instructional faculty on library development and library instruction and research would be facilitated by a decision to move librarians to faculty status. Additionally, the current practice of assigning course instruction above their regular duties outside of the library to librarians may cause a decrease in the level of library service. The college is currently involved in a search for the Library Director position. This position has been filled by an acting director during a number of unsuccessful searches. Both the low salary level offered and the current shortage nation wide of professionally qualified librarians indicate that the current search may also be unsuccessful. Given the importance of this leadership position to the development of services and collections to support the new baccalaureate curriculum, the college may wish to reconsider the salary level for the director position. In light of these factors, is recommended that the college review these problematic areas of library staffing (5.D.1-2).

While current library funding levels appear adequate for the college’s two-year programs, movement towards upper division work and baccalaureate programs are beginning to strain the library resources. Stable funding within the college base budget for this collection development and other needs is strongly recommended (5.D.6).
Standard 5.E - Planning and Evaluation

The library maintains a strategic plan that is well articulated with and included in the campus Information Technology Plan (5.E.2). Interview evidence indicates that library needs in building its staff, collections and services toward the baccalaureate level are part of the overall college plan for its upper division programs. It is strongly suggested that the college continue to recognize the library needs as it builds its baccalaureate program.

The library’s evaluation and assessment efforts have been episodic and somewhat sporadic in nature. Various collection assessments and user surveys were conducted in preparation for self study. While these activities are positive, it is suggested that the staff needs to continue these efforts on a regular basis to provide longitudinal data for decision making in the future (5.E.3).

Commendation

1. Dixie State College is commended for its commitment to providing a high level of information technology for students and faculty. The Smith Computer Center, online student records and registration, and the robust and well planned network, the online resource support in the library, the well trained IT staff and adequate IT budget resources are all examples of the level of this commitment. As the college implements the new SCT Banner Systems, it is suggested that a high level of support and training for staff be maintained and financially supported by the college (5.B.5).

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the college continue to build its library collections to support the baccalaureate program while maintaining support for the entire spectrum of materials which underpin its two-year programs (5.A.2).

2. It is recommended that the college review the problematic areas of library staffing (5.D.1-2).

3. It is recommended that stable funding within the college base budget be established for needs related to its new baccalaureate program (5.D.6).
STANDARD SIX- GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard 6.A - Governance System

Utah's system of higher education defines much of the local governance operations of Dixie State College through its Board of Regents. The Regents have authority for executive appointment, system budget and finance, state policy, and program approval. The local Board of Trustees serves as a bridge to the community, raises funds, and assists in identifying honorary degree recipients: with powers delegated by the Regents, it approves local policy, reviews program effectiveness, and consults with the Regents.

The college has developed or is developing appropriate policies to ensure that responsibility and lines of authority among the various campus entities is working appropriately. Some faculty, however, express mystification about how the whole of the local governance system works (6.A.1 and 6.A.2), and state that communication about outcomes of policy debate or recommendations could be better communicated. The division of authority and responsibility between state (Regents) and local (Trustees) is clear (6.A.4), although the protocols for communication between the two are less well developed.

Standard 6.B - Governing Board

Two governing boards (Regents and Trustees) are appointed by the governor to represent local and state interests. Their operations are defined by statute and policy. Both are concerned with the adequacy of funding and both exercise broadbased oversight of the campus management personnel and management compliance with policy. Both were involved in the recent revision of the college's mission to reflect the addition of select baccalaureate programs. Governance was reviewed by Trustees, faculty, staff, students and administration for the self study.

Standard 6.C - Leadership and Management

Dixie State College's administration has well defined areas of responsibility and operates under a number of policies which delineate expectations for ethical behavior (6.B.3). The president has created structures for participatory and timely decision making and has provided exemplary leadership in setting institutional goals and priorities in response to regional demand and the needs of a maturing institution. Procedures for the evaluation of administration are in place (6.C.3). Institutional advancement activities have been very successful in supporting the mission of the college (6.C.4). Personnel policies are published, accessible, and periodically reviewed (6.C.8). While administrative and staff salaries are not high, they are within the range of similar institutions in the region and turnover is not currently a serious problem (6.C.9). It will require continued attention to compensation issues, however, to keep Dixie State College competitive. Through the Annual Report and other reports, institutional research results are widely distributed and are the basis for improvements such as the Freshman Orientation and Sophomore Capstone courses (6.C.7).
Standard 6.D - Faculty Role in Governance

Faculty

While not all faculty would agree, their role in governance is extensive. They are represented appropriately in key decision making forums. They have formal and informal access to all levels of administration. They have such traditional areas as curriculum and academic policy within their purview.

Staff

Staff members at Dixie are typically long-time employees with many ties to the college and community. About 90% of those eligible are dues-paying members of the association. The full membership meets at least annually, and holds more frequent social events. Building representatives are elected to a group which meets more regularly.

Possible conflicts between “professional” and “non-professional” (these do not seem to be comfortable designations) have been addressed through selection of a “President” and “President Elect” for the association, nominated in alternate years from the ranks of one or the other group. Both then sit on the President’s Executive Council.

A current topic being considered by the association is the overload assignment of teaching duties to staff members. Wages and salaries, and related issues such as pay scales and preference for job openings, are of serious and continuing concern. Staff members feel they have appropriate access and lines of communication to the President about their issues; they are less clear about decision- making processes, and the ultimate disposition of their recommendations.

Standard 6.E - Student Role in Governance

Students have both formal and informal roles in governance. They maintain their own student government, creating programs and policy. They are represented on key decision making groups such as the Trustees. Informally, they have access to the administration and show evidence of successful lobbying on student issues through that means.

Nondiscrimination

The college has developed selection and promotion and tenure procedures intended to prevent discrimination.

Recommendation

1. The Committee notes that the institution used cautious language in the Self Study regarding the "general" understanding various governance entities have about the college's committee and council structure. The Committee's interviews confirmed that there is far from universal understanding of "how it works" and, therefore, recommends that efforts be made to clarify the flow of recommendations and decisions among the various bodies. (6.D)
STANDARD SEVEN - FINANCE

Standard 7.A. Financial Planning

Financial planning and budget management are strengths at Dixie State College, reflecting the priority accorded them by the institution’s president and the oversight of an attentive Board of Trustees. The institution operates with appropriate autonomy within a context of well-differentiated roles and responsibilities between the Board of Regents and the trustees and of clear authority and reporting relationships with various departments of state government. (7.A.1) Financial planning involves a number of committees and councils representative of programs and activities across the institution, with the strategic planning culminating in a “Future Projects List” that guides investment in new academic programs, new buildings and major remodels, capital improvements, and land acquisition. (7.A.2)

Acting in response to a recommendation in the full-scale accreditation evaluation of 1992, the college had, by the 1997 interim evaluation, resolved the earlier concern, proceeding to implement a budget development process that is open, participatory, and responsive to departments and employees, in fact, extending beyond managers and first-line administrators to uncover programmatic and staffing needs throughout the campus. The current evaluation found this process to be fully institutionalized, with requests for funding submitted in response to the annual call being evaluated against the college’s mission and goals, and prioritized accordingly. The current budget reduction environment has, however, prompted a temporary truncating of the process to enable a more centralized response to budget contingencies. (7.A.3)

Debt for capital outlay is carefully reviewed, monitored, and controlled (and avoided where other financing options are possible, as with the Gardner Student Center addition). While there is not an institutional policy regarding incurring such debt, appropriate controls exist through the retention by the state legislature of approval to issue bonds. (7.A.4)


While the college has provided evidence of its relative, overall financial health and stability (Ohio state model, current funds year-end balances, and so forth), the current budget-cutting environment has created strains across the institution. (7.B.3) In the interest of protecting the instructional programs and serving a greater number of students, salary improvements for all faculty and staff have been withheld this year, funding for equipment has been reduced, numerous staff have volunteered to teach courses and a number of layoffs of support staff have been implemented, among the numerous measures taken. (7.B.5) All areas of the institution have incurred cutbacks in funding, including instruction. The impacts of this fiscal tightening include the prevalence of especially demanding employee workloads and the potential for increased deferred maintenance and staff turnover. Thus far the campus community has made extraordinary efforts to respond to the budget cutback and continue to serve students effectively. Should there be another round of budget reductions, it could severely test the financial resiliency of the institution as resources are further depleted. (7.B.1, 7.B.5, and 7.B.7)
Standard 7.C Financial Management

The college possesses a well-organized financial management structure, dedicated and knowledgeable leadership, and a well-established reporting framework through which information is regularly shared with all levels of the institution, the governing boards, and applicable state agencies. (7.C.1 and 7.C.2) Reports are the product of an increasingly antiquated SCT Banner financial software system, which has necessitated that data be downloaded into other software for periodic reporting. The state has committed to an upgrade to a newer version of Banner financial software, the local cutover expected in July 2003. While welcoming the transition to the new Banner product, the Business Services staff will be challenged to implement the conversion to ensure report-writing packages are in place while continuing to manage an expanding workload. Nonetheless, recent attainment of stability and training among the current accounting staff should assist in this regard, though salary disparities for these and other College staff persist with outside employers. (7.C.3)

Though the fiscal year 2002, audited financial statements were not available to the evaluator, earlier audit reports showed a positive trend that the college’s financial reports “present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Dixie State College of Utah…” (7.C.13) Comments contained within the auditors’ management letters, which have consistently offered “unqualified opinions,” have been attended to by the institution. As noted above, the college has also addressed the high turnover of staff that created a number of problems related to timeliness of work output and weakness in internal controls. These controls were recently tested by the fraudulent and deceptive actions of two employees. The institution responded promptly to minimize the exposure and implement corrective actions. (7.C.3 and 7.C.11)

Standard 7.D Fundraising and Development

The college’s Institutional Advancement program has achieved exceptional results over the years, in tandem with the Dixie State College Foundation. (7.D.3) Major gifts have been received to supplement public funding, enabling construction of key academic and other facilities and land acquisition. (7.B.1) Private donations are importantly supportive of scholarships and other campus fundraising objectives, and reflect tireless efforts to build and sustain positive relationships with alumni and the public at large. (7.D.1)
STANDARD EIGHT - PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Standard 8.A Instructional and Support Facilities

The college’s physical resources are generally sufficient to support instructional and other programming in furtherance of the institution’s mission and goals. (8.A.1) The most glaring deficiency noted by the evaluator’s will be corrected by the construction of a new Performing Arts Center. (8.A.2) Since the last full scale evaluation in 1992, a number of buildings and other facilities have been constructed on the St. George campus and at off-campus sites that support the expanding enrollment and broadening of program offerings. Buildings and grounds are well maintained and financing for capital repair has been sufficiently consistent to avoid a sizable backlog of deferred maintenance. (8.A.4) Problematic facilities are Fortunately few in number due to visionary and thorough planning and successful fundraising efforts. The Gymnasium presents a set of problems that continue related to obsolescence, life-safety, code, and ADA compliance. Similar problems prompted the recent demolition of the Graff Fine Arts Center to make way for a new structure now in the design stage, as noted above. (8.A.5) The facility owned by the separate DXATC organization at which the college’s diesel program is taught is too small and insufficiently equipped. Reflecting a problem shared with many institutions, the availability of convenient parking remains a concern of students, faculty, and staff, with spaces at a distance from the campus core underused. (8.A.2 and 8.A.6)

Health, safety, and access by physically disabled persons are important priorities as the college proceeds with further construction and maintains older buildings. (8.A.5 and 8.C.3) Occupancy of the North Instructional Building acquired in 2001 and the North Plaza Building in 1999 posed a number of challenges with regard to fire code that were subsequently corrected. Notification of the safety issues in these buildings prompted the college to completely reconfigure its capital improvements requests and internal budgets. Further, the college undergoes a comprehensive annual self-inspection process, administered by the institution’s Safety Committee. These efforts, and perhaps others, are serving to create an awareness of safety on the campus. (8.A.5) The most pressing safety need encountered by evaluators during the visitation pertained to the risk to pedestrians crossing 100 South between the recently acquired buildings to the north and the core of the campus to the south.

Standard 8.B Equipment and Materials

Equipment is, for the most part, sufficient in quality and amount to support curricular offerings and support services. (8.B.1) This is particular true with respect to the array of computing equipment and the supporting infrastructure, and was noted as well by evaluators in the science and health sciences laboratories. The 2001 Technology Report strategically outlines important future investments. The utilities infrastructure is quite functional, and well maintained. Equipment and furnishings in several academic programs were identified by some students and faculty as “thin,” but did not appear to unduly impair the instructional process. Funding to purchase, replace, and upgrade equipment is derived from a variety of sources – from departmental funds to the president’s “reallocation fund” - and, at least prior to the recent state imposed budget cut, was adequate to finance such transactions. (8.B.2)
Standard 8.C Physical Resources Planning

Comprehensive physical resource planning reflects yet another of the college’s strengths, engaging as it does the collective vision of the campus community in furtherance of the mission and goals. (8.C.2) The current Campus Master Plan is the culmination of this extensive planning process, mapping the future physical features of the campus. The Future Projects list is another comprehensive document that outlines future projects, time lines, and the offices responsible for the designated actions. (8.C.1) Plans for investment in capital improvements and construction of new facilities are regularly reported to the Board of Trustees, and approved by that body when state project review and approval is being sought by the institution. (8.C.4) The physical character of the St. George campus portrays the careful planning that is institutionalized through various committees and councils.

STANDARD NINE - INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The essential culture of Dixie State College directs its operations toward adherence to high ethical standards in its outward representation of itself, in its teaching and service, in its treatment of its students and employees, and in its relationships with regulating and accrediting bodies. Its policies and practices appear to protect intellectual and academic freedom and encourage free inquiry. Its policies define and prohibit conflict of interest on the part of its constituencies. Its efforts at meeting its publicly ascribed goals are laudable. Yet, its performance under this standard is not fully successful.

The evaluation committee has cited in various sections of this report what appear to be lapses in its dealings with students, the public, and external agencies (9.A.1). Whether it is a failure to "teach out" the remainder of a discontinued program to ensure fair treatment of students or the publishing of inaccurate information regarding the current accreditation of programs (9.a.2 and.3) or the communication of inaccurate information in schedule or catalogs (9.A.2 and .3), the institution has had lapses in its attempt to adhere to the highest ethical standards. The team has made a strong general recommendation in this regard.

Any institution undergoing rapid change in size, mission, personnel, or environment is prey to lapses. The Committee understands that. The obligation to exert care in all such matters and at all times, however, continues.
GENERAL COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

1. General - The Committee commends the Dixie State College of Utah faculty, staff, and administrators for their high level of dedication and commitment to the success of Dixie State College students.

2. Information Technology - The Committee commends Dixie State College for its commitment to providing a high level of information technology for students and faculty. The Smith Computer Center, online student records and registration, the robust and well planned network, the online resource support in the library, the well trained IT staff and adequate IT budget resources are all examples of the level of this commitment. As the college implements the new SCT Banner Systems, it is suggested that a high level of support and training for staff be maintained and financially supported by the college. (5.B.5)

3. Community Service and Continuing Education - Dixie State College has demonstrated exemplary performance in providing community service, continuing education, and cultural activities in the local community. These activities are consistent with the Mission of the college and Dixie is to be commended for the formation of these partnerships and collaborations with the community. Examples include Community Education, the Adult Education Program/Americorps program, the Cultural Activities program, the Hurricane and Kane County Educational Centers, the Institute for Continued Learning, Leadership St. George, the Southwest Orchestra, and the Dixie College Business alliance. It is clear that Dixie State College is an active partner with the community.

4. Fundraising - The Committee commends Dixie State College for its extraordinary success in fundraising, exemplified in the amount of scholarship funding made available to support student access to the institution and in the major gifts that have played a significant role in ensuring that construction of key facilities proceeds in a timely response to enrollment growth and programmatic needs. This admirable record, recognized nationally, is the result of nurturing relationships with individuals and organizations in a forthright and informed manner over many years. The college’s students are the ultimate beneficiaries of these dedicated efforts.

5. Physical Appearance - The Committee commends Dixie State College for the physical appearance of its St. George campus, which serves to welcome the visitor and reinforce the sense of pride so evident with the members of its community - students, faculty, staff, trustees, and citizens of the region. Nestled in a strikingly dramatic setting, the campus displays carefully manicured grounds, broad open spaces, appropriate interconnecting paths between buildings, well-maintained structures and supporting infrastructure, and intentional placement of the Gardner Student Center at the heart of the campus.

6. Physical Development - The Committee commends Dixie State College for the priority given to planning for the physical development of the St. George campus. In view of the addition of baccalaureate programs and rapid growth in enrollment, the phased addition of building space and siting of new structures, enabled by key property acquisitions, is being given the visionary attention that will ensure the functionality and beauty of the campus in the future.
Recommendations

1. Faculty Evaluation - The accreditation team recommends that Dixie State College review and revise its faculty evaluation process, paying specific attention to policy 4.1. While the team did find evidence that Dixie applied its evaluation policy in a number of departments, the lack of consistent application across all departments was apparent. Recommendation number two in the 1992 Northwest Accreditation report indicated, “the faculty evaluation process is inconsistent and fragmented, lacking clear direction and conformity.” This is still the case in 2002 (4.1).

2. Workloads - The Committee recommends that Dixie State College engage in a process that will bring faculty workloads into compliance with Standards 2.A.1 and 4.A.3. In order for the institution to demonstrate its commitment to high standards of teaching and learning (2.A.1) it is essential that sufficient human resources be provided to support the educational programs and facilitate student achievement of program objectives whenever and however they are offered. Current full-time faculty workloads are high; however faculty have willingly taken on additional burdens of teaching overloads and additional assignments that have exceeded the amount where the high standards of teaching and learning can be sustained. Further, there are too many instances where the burdens on faculty and staff workloads come to the point that there is not sufficient time and support allowing for professional growth and renewal (4.A.3).

3. Institutional Integrity - The team found inconsistencies, inaccuracies and omissions in information presented to Dixie’s constituencies (including the Commission) and some lapses in ethical treatment of undergraduate students. Whether its failure to “teach out” a discontinued program to ensure fair student treatment, publication of inaccurate information about the current accreditation status of programs, communication of inaccurate information in schedules and catalog, or failure to document compliance with policies, the institution has had lapses in its attempts to adhere to high ethical standards. Any institution undergoing rapid change in size, mission, or personnel is prey to lapses, and the Committee understands that. Taken individually, these instances vary in their significance. Although unintentional on the institution's part, the number of such occurrences indicates inadequate review of publications, and inadequate communication among those responsible for making, documenting and publicizing administrative actions and decisions. No single action or procedural change can correct this array of problems. The Committee recommends that the college re-evaluate the means by which policies and procedures are disseminated, their application monitored, and their results implemented and reported in college documents. (Standard 9, 9.A.2 and 9.A.3)

4. Recommendation on Mission - The mission statement of Dixie State College of Utah was created amidst change that is still unfolding. It does not appear that the internal community was fully engaged in its creation. While it is published widely and widely recognized by the campus community, it is not as widely understood, perhaps because it does not capture the unique characteristics of Dixie State College or give clear guidance as to the next changes. The evaluation team therefore recommends that the campus review the current statement to both reaffirm its general content and to implement whatever adjustments would make it fully consonant with current institutional realities and reflect Dixie’s unique characteristics (1.B.3 and 1.B.9). Dixie can use that process to its advantage so it decides how to resolve its resource dilemmas.