SUMMARY

The process for creating this self-study along with the individual academic and non-academic unit self-studies has encouraged and allowed all areas within the university the opportunity to appraise their areas with an eye to program evaluation and improvement. It has allowed UVU to determine the extent to which it meets the standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The process permitted and encouraged all within the university the opportunity to engage in the process of identifying long- and short-term goals to further the institution’s mission.

Since the last reaffirmation of accreditation in 2005 and the subsequent interim visit of 2006, the university has achieved many goals, partly in response to the recommendations made by NWCCU. The following is a broad summary of those accomplishments and transitions.

1. Transition to University status. Utah Valley University successfully transitioned from a state college to a university. This transition included the development of a new mission statement, a restructuring of academic schools/colleges, and a myriad of administrative adjustments associated with the name change. Since the transition, the university has received approval to offer three master’s degree programs (Master of Education, Master of Science in Nursing, and Master of Business Administration). The first graduating class from the Master of Education program completed in April 2010.

2. Strategic planning and resource allocation. UVU uses an integrated Planning, Budgeting, and Accountability (PBA) process that provides a framework for setting, reviewing, refining, and evaluating goals for all areas of the university. PBA is driven by the mission and strategic directions of the university. Through the PBA process, divisions and departments develop initiatives that support the university’s strategic directions and operational needs and also request resources for those initiatives. This process was instrumental in allocating the $10 million of new state tax funds appropriated by the legislature in support of the institution’s change to Utah Valley University.

3. Growth. Physical facilities continue to expand to meet the growing needs of student enrollment. UVU has added 11 new facilities, four of which were constructed for the university and seven were purchased. The building square footage now totals 1,852,242 square feet. The newest facility is the Library with ground breaking for the Science Building to take place summer 2010. Further, the university has invested heavily in the technological transformation of a large number of classrooms to enhance the learning environment.

4. Student Services. Student success is a primary goal of Utah Valley University. To support this goal, the Student Affairs Division presents a progressive and energetic array of student services including enrollment management, student advisement and support services, student life, athletics, and the center for the advancement of leadership. Student Affairs uses a mature strategic planning process to continue to monitor goals and plan for future needs. A director for enrollment management has been hired to direct the growth in student population that will enable students to obtain an excellent education and help the university maximize the use of its physical facilities and teaching professionals. The remodel of the Losee Center (former library) as the Losee Center for Student Success has provided a central location for many student service functions that were previously scattered across campus.

5. Policy development. A Chief Planning, Budget, and Policy Officer has been designated to oversee issues relating to policy and to direct the policy office which serves as the centralized policy administration function for the university. A director of compliance and policy administration was hired to oversee policy issues and to assist with policy development (e.g., policy sponsor, policy steward, drafting committee, etc.). Since the last NWCCU visit many significant policies have been created or updated (e.g., Policy Governing Policies and Procedures, Faculty Workload, Conflict of Interest, and many relating to faculty responsibilities).
6. **Integration.** During fall 2009, UVU’s mission, role statement, core values, and other guiding documents were evaluated. Under the direction of President Holland, a model for integrating the concepts into four terms—Student Success, Engaged, Serious, and Inclusive—was developed. These four terms have been further reviewed and developed by a Core Themes Task Force and the Strategic Directions Advisory Committee for acceptance as UVU’s Core Themes. These Core Themes and their Objectives will guide UVU’s future planning and resource allocation activities.

While significant progress on goals has been achieved, the faculty and staff of UVU recognize the value of continual improvement for programs and services. Challenges (which provide opportunity for improvement) have been identified through the process of completing the self-study. The university will incorporate these findings into its planning and assessment processes and initiate or continue efforts for improvement. The following are a summary of these findings.

1. **State Tax Fund Support.** State revenue shortfalls with their corresponding budget reductions at the university have diminished confidence in state support in the near term. UVU administrators will continue to communicate with state leaders on tax fund revenue projections and internally identify contingency plans for possible future tax fund reductions.

2. **Growth.** The university has put into effect plans and tools to respond to student enrollment growth. While additional students provide additional tuition revenue, growth also presents challenges. Among these challenges are course scheduling, space, faculty and support services. President Holland directed the development of a Strategic Plan for Managing Growth which is nearing completion.

3. **Space.** The number of classrooms, combined with the limited square footage of instructional facilities, is a determining and sometimes limiting factor in enrollments for some courses and programs. Additional classrooms and laboratories are needed to meet the continuing increase in student enrollment. Progress in being made acquiring new buildings for campus and optimum use of existing space through the use of stringent class scheduling procedures is helping with the challenge. The facilities department continues to seek appropriate funding to enhance and support UVU’s facilities and master plan.

4. **Culture of Assessment.** Much progress has made in planning and assessment at an institutional level and within units. The Academic Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IE) is making significant progress. In the coming months, a new administrative support IE committee will be established to encourage and support improved assessment and planning efforts in non-academic units.

5. **Fundraising and alumni engagement.** At the appropriate time, UVU needs to conduct a comprehensive capital campaign. UVU competes with a very large, private university, which is in very close proximity to the institution, as well as other state institutions in fund-raising efforts. President Holland’s realignment of advancement activities and the appointment of a new Vice President are first steps in improving the coordination and impact of development activities.

Utah Valley University values the opportunity of completing this self-study and looks forward to feedback from NWCCU evaluation team.