**Assessment Plan for the University of Utah MUSE Project**

**27 June 2017**

**Goal of the University of Utah MUSE Project:**

The MUSE Project is dedicated to enriching the educational experience of undergraduate students at the University of Utah. We aim to provide students with educational experiences that have a defining and empowering effect on their intellectual growth, professional development, and path in life. We believe that opportunities for “signature” learning occur most frequently in personal and mentored relationships between individual students and members of our faculty and professional staff.

**Description:**

MUSE works to achieve its goals through an array of programming that is accessible and engaging for students from all academic disciplines. Programming includes: campus based internships and MUSE Theme Year activities (student led book discussions, a keynote speaker, a reception, and dinner), Casual Fridays, and Lunchtime Lectures.

**Program Objectives**

1. Facilitating contacts beyond the classroom between undergraduate students and University of Utah professors, which gives students a greater opportunity for support, mentoring, and inspiration.
2. Nurturing community among students in the MUSE setting—bringing students together at MUSE events across all academic disciplines and demographic boundaries for fruitful exchange and mutual support.
3. Helping students cultivate their inward lives and strengths in a world of omnivorous screens and mass distraction, by helping each student find, in Walt Whitman’s words, the promise that “waits intrinsically in yourself.”
4. Connecting students with deeply engaged learning opportunities offered by other offices at the U—other chances for them to find their “signature experiences” as undergraduates.
5. Encouraging students to build their conversational skills, both as speakers and listeners, and by helping students to experience conversation as a medium of education and self-development.

**Evidence to Inform the Program Objectives**

1. **Fostering Student Relationships with Professors**: Objective 1 is strongly grounded in the MUSE Internship Program. The formation of mentor/mentee relationships will be analyzed with the feedback collected from Mentor and Intern Reflection Forms. The broader population of MUSE Scholars, including those who have not completed an internship, will also be asked to reflect upon their experiences forming connections and finding mentors, especially through our MUSE Professors program, on the student survey.
2. **Building Community Among Students**: Objective 2 is accomplished through weekly, monthly, and yearly MUSE programming, which includes Casual Fridays, Lunchtime Lectures, and Theme Year Events. The efficacy of MUSE programming in facilitating a sense of community will be assessed in the student survey and with MUSE Scholar Spotlights. The spotlight interview process provides meaningful, personalized information about students’ experiences with the MUSE. Excerpts from these interviews are compiled on the MUSE website.
3. **Self-Reflection and Building Inner Strengths**: Objective 3 addresses the broader impact of student reflection and growth based on enrichment from the MUSE Project experience. Data for this objective will be collected from students through a survey question.
4. **Connecting Students with Other Campus Offices**: Objective 4 will be informed by listing the MUSE’s connections to other campus organizations and programs, such as The Hinckley Institute of Politics, ACCESS Program for Women in Science and Mathematics, and the Marriott Library. This objective will also be addressed in a question on the survey regarding students’ experiences in finding and connecting to other campus groups through the MUSE Project (through the online opportunity database, internships, etc).
5. **Developing the Art of Conversation:** This objective will be accomplished through MUSE events where students converse with each other and faculty – book discussions, receptions, dinners, the Lunchtime Lecture series, and Casual Fridays. This objective will be informed by a question on the student survey and through statements from MUSE Scholar Spotlights.

**Assessment Report**

A report summarizing the findings generated by the evidence-collecting process explained above will be submitted to the Senior Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Studies. This report will encompass a reflection on how well the objectives were met, and what aspects of our program might be adjusted and improved to help us better serve the undergraduate community.