4.2.1. Student and Market Demand for the Program:

One of the current issues within the state of Utah, is the lack of ability to fill the demand for licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs). Currently, there are only 2 Masters level programs for MFTs in the state, and they enroll a total of 18 students per year with an acceptance rate of 20%, and only one of these programs is part of the USHE system. Employment of marriage and family therapists is projected to grow 23 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. Given that Utah is already lacking in MFT practitioners, this growth will lead to a large increase in job opportunities within the MFT field in Utah. The reason for this growth is due to the increasing use of integrated care, in which the treatment of multiple problems are addressed in an integrated fashion by a group of specialists who coordinate treatment options.

Many DSU students are interested in obtaining needed training to be effective therapists, while also wanting to remain in the Southern Utah area. For example, 56 Psychology majors responded to a survey asking about their interest in pursuing a Master's degree in MFT. Of the 56, 39 (70%) said they were interested in pursuing this degree. However, when these same students were asked if they'd be interested in a Master's in MFT program at Dixie State, 45 (80%) said they were interested.

We believe that a differential tuition will have little or no impact on student access and retention. The differential tuition for the MFT program will be a sign that the program is of high quality. The cost of the tuition will be viewed by the students as a necessity for an advanced degree that will include access to job placement and pedagogy that will prepare them for the licensing exam.

4.2.2. Impact of Differential Tuition Rates on Student Access and Retention:

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4.2.3. Tuition Rates of Comparable Programs at Other Institutions:

In-state tuition per credit hour = $500 (UU = $1,180 for Med Clinical Mental; USU = $710; UVU = $355 for Master of Social Work). Out-of-state tuition per credit hour = $695 (UU = $4,031 for Med Clinical Mental; USU = $2,381; UVU = $935 for Master of Social Work). Please see Appendix 1 at the bottom for more details. Tuition may be adjusted in the future based on student demand and relative to other program tuition rates. Tuition may also increase based on accreditation attainment. DSU is committed to offering a strong program that is also affordable. DSU would be comparable and even lower than other similar programs within the area.

Salaries in the MFT range anywhere from $39,000 to $76,745 with a high of about $110,000. Entry level positions start around $40,000. The national average salary is $71,000. The average in St George is a little over $63,000, according to Psychology Today and various employment agencies.

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4.2.4. Potential Earnings Capacity of Program Graduates:

A master's degree is being requested to respond to student and employer demand in Washington County. Marriage and Family Therapists are a high-demand profession. Graduates are likely candidates for key positions in residential, behavioral health and private practices. There is currently a demand for competent clinicians, particularly those that specialize in working with children. The goal of the Marriage and Family Therapy Master's Program is to prepare competent and ethical mental health professionals dedicated to improving the human condition through both prevention and intervention. As such, this degree will provide necessary experience to prepare students for licensure as Marriage and Family Therapists, with the curriculum providing extensive opportunities through clinical practicum courses to develop their skills in practical environments. Program faculty emphasize a multilevel, systemic perspective that includes individual internal relationship processes and reflects cultural meanings, constraints, and global complexity.
with a particular focus on working with children. This degree will align with other USHE programs by focusing on children initially, with the possibility of eventually expanding to add focus areas for adolescents (including recreation therapy), culture specific, and for older individuals.

**Estimated Student Program Enrollment and Number of Courses (including level designation, 1000, 2000, etc):**

We anticipate and can accept a maximum of 8 students per year due to accreditation standards. The program is cohort based, for years two and beyond we anticipate 16 students (8 in each cohort).

Two degrees are being proposed: a Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) and a Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy (M.S. in MFT). The core course requirements for the two programs are identical except for the Thesis requirement in the M.S. program. The 14 common core courses total 45 credit hours, which both programs must complete for graduation, while the Thesis requirement is one course for 6 credit hours. All of the courses offered are at the 6,000 level designation.

**Estimated Revenue and Uses (including program and institution):**

Revenues from tuition will fund the following:

- New full-time faculty member and part-time staff position to coordinate off-site clinical hours.
- Clinical practicum supervisors
- Equipment to facilitate video supervised practicum experiences.
- Operating costs including library resources, supplies, marketing, travel and professional development for faculty to sustain a Master's level program.
- Accreditation costs (COAMFTE)

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