

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Academic Master Plan
2008-2014**

December 2008

Background and Process

With a new President and a 50th anniversary, 2007-2008 has been an ideal time for UNLV to look back on what we have achieved in the past 50 years and focus on what we want to become in the next 50 years. In his April 2007 inauguration speech, President David Ashley offered the campus a bold vision of the university's future and called for a commitment to defining our unique identity and values that could, in turn, guide our investments and inform and improve our education and research programs. He challenged the campus to engage in a comprehensive planning process that would articulate our identity, lay out broad goals to guide us, and lead to implementation strategies to achieve those goals. We hoped that our planning efforts would:

- Create a shared understanding of our current status.
- Address major challenges and identify major opportunities.
- Build community and a common vision for UNLV.
- Enhance our educational effectiveness and improve student learning and success.
- Improve our national and international reputation and rankings.
- Establish select areas to build programmatic excellence.
- Better serve the region around us and aid economic diversification for Nevada.
- Align decision making and budgeting with our educational and research goals, aided by appropriate performance metrics.
- Increase community and legislative support.
- Gain research focus and establish a cooperative research agenda.

Thus, we launched "*Focus 50 to 100 – Planning the Future*" to create a common set of goals and to serve as a template for establishing priorities to guide our growth and improve our university. We initiated this process with informal discussions in the summer of 2007, which led to a campus wide Town Hall "kick-off" meeting in September 2007, where we critically reviewed our progress in education, research, and infrastructure; invited panels of community and university stakeholders to discuss our identity and values; and began to address our planning priorities. Our approach was to engage as many stakeholders as possible, which occurred through a website dedicated to the planning process and a series of sixteen Town Hall meetings that helped us develop consensus around our identity and common values; our needs and goals for education, research, and scholarship; and our priorities for improving our operating and physical infrastructure so that we could achieve our goals.

These meetings culminated in a planning retreat held February 15, 2008, involving more than 100 community, faculty, staff, and student

stakeholders, guided by our President and Executive Vice President and Provost. The results included a series of brief statements defining our identity and values, our educational goals, our research goals, and the infrastructure improvements we needed to achieve them. We also developed a comprehensive set of priorities and action steps to guide the implementation teams who will be charged with translating the plan into action and measurable results. The plan was approved by the Faculty Senate and Council of Deans and then was reviewed and approved by the Cabinet and President for submission to the Board of Regents for consideration at its June 2008 meeting. The UNLV Strategic Plan was accepted by the Board of Regents at that meeting. The Academic Master Plan is a part of that planning process and planning document and will serve not only as a guide for our 2010 accreditation visit by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, but it will also guide major academic, research, policy, and budget decisions.

EDUCATION

The UNLV community is dedicated to our students' success, designing learning experiences characterized by opportunities for achievement in and out of the classroom. Students will acquire the skills, knowledge, and values needed to be successful, informed, and engaged citizens in the global community. Acquisition of such skills is measured by a comprehensive assessment process that tracks achievement and guides curriculum development. Our educational programs promote:

- Understanding of local, regional, and global connections and systems as well as the development of multi-cultural and plural-cultural competencies.
- Broad elucidation of sustainability as it impacts economic, environmental, and social concerns.
- Integrative thinking across a spectrum of disciplines.
- Substantial research, scholarly, and creative opportunities for all students.
- Diversity leadership, social justice, ethical responsibility, and civic engagement.
- The ability to understand and embrace constructive change.

Foundational Skills

As a result of their educational experience at UNLV, students will master the foundational skills and abilities required for a liberal education, allowing them to be successful in their lives and careers. Our graduating students will be:

- Intellectually competent, with the foundational skills needed for success.
- Able, as critical thinkers, to embrace complexity and abstraction.

- Appreciative of aesthetics and creative expression.
- Able to access information effectively.
- Well versed in the principles of research.
- Self-motivated, independent, life-long learners.
- Able to think independently, while still being effective in collaborative activities.
- Adaptive problem-solvers who are willing to challenge conventional wisdom.
- Accountable for their own well-being as responsible individuals who also contribute to the well-being of others and of society.
- Open to the exchange of ideas, including those from diverse and global communities.
- Capable of achieving success in their chosen fields and disciplines.

Education Priorities and Initiatives Currently Underway

- Established a “One Stop” student center in the Student Services Building
- Reorganizing University College into an Academic Success Center housed in the former Student Health Center
- Conducting searches for a Director of First Year Learning and a Director of Student Learning Support
- Raised admissions standards, streamlined admissions processing, and developed a seamless alternative admissions protocol
- Initiated planning for the development of new General Education requirements to make them consistent with planning priorities
- Created a team that will focus on diagnosing and filling gaps in math skills during a student’s first year
- Improved the enrollment management team and conducted internal and external reviews to improve operations
- Set retention goals to establish UNLV among its peer institutions
- Implemented mid-semester grade reporting for lower-division courses for early feedback and advising
- Established mandatory advising for all alternate admits in Fall 2008 with the goal of mandatory advising for all first year students in Fall 2009
- Developed assessment plans and gathering data on virtually all academic programs and using these data to continuously improve
- Joined the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) sponsored by the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) in order to show more transparency and accountability to stakeholders and the public

Education Priorities and Initiatives For Future Implementation

- Student Success and Learning Communities

- I. Expand advising support and tie advising to registration for lower division and transfer students
- II. Establish a set of ideal educational experiences and create organizational structures that improve student learning and their sense of community on campus
- III. Develop unified first-year experiences that enable students to achieve common skills and knowledge sets prior to entering an academic major
- Curriculum Improvement
 - I. Establish an integrated curriculum, based upon appropriate revision of the General Education requirements, and assess the agreed upon student learning outcomes
 - II. Create additional capstone courses, including cross-disciplinary ones
 - III. Assess overall curricular effectiveness
 - IV. Incorporate significant elements of international, multicultural, and pluracultural education into the undergraduate program
 - V. Create and support relevant internships, service learning, and practitioner experiences to enable students to better understand professions in their disciplines and further develop their professional aspirations
 - VI. Integrate research components and competencies into all programs of study and require appropriate research experiences for all students
- Educational Collaboration and Partnerships
 - I. Build linkages within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) and other higher education entities to expand statewide access to critical programs not only for UNLV students but also for students at partner institutions
 - II. Work with regional and state PK-12 institutions to help improve the success of entering students and to focus teacher training programs and priorities to reflect the needs of our community, the state, and the region
 - III. Collaborate with NSHE institutions and other higher education entities to insure academic integrity, consistent learning outcomes, fair credit allocation for transfer students, and to create clear articulation pathways for students from other institutions
- Educational Innovation and Multidisciplinary Focus
 - I. Develop trans-/multi-/interdisciplinary programs and activities that incorporate multiple colleges, departments, and groups

- II. Assess how the university is organized and make changes as needed to improve student learning environments and experiences.

Academic Programs

As a result of the comprehensive campus-wide strategic planning process, an inventory of possible new programs of study is included below. Planning for these programs ranges from conceptual to advanced stages of proposal development. The list has not been fully vetted through the academic and administrative system within the university given that, when a unit believes that it is an appropriate time to move a program forward, a needs assessment will be conducted, the academic quality of the program will be reviewed by faculty committees, the fit with the university and NSHE missions will be assessed, and the budgetary implications will be reviewed. If it is deemed appropriate by the university, then the proposal would move forward to the NSHE Academic Affairs Council and, ultimately to the Board of Regents for review and final approval. As a result of these various steps and processes and the current budget reality, all of these programs are highly tentative.

New Program Name	Brief Description	Date of Implementation	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources Outside of State Dollars
Ph.D. in Public Health	Joint degree in public health with UNR & UNLV	2009	UNLV share approximately \$20,000 per year	Federal Grants
Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education	Provide advanced degree for those in ECE and Special Education	2010	Unknown at this time	Grants
Ph.D. in Business Administration	Advanced study in business administration	2011	Unknown at this time	Possible private donations
M.S. in Water Resource Management and Hydrologic Sciences	Joint degree with UNLV, UNR, and DRI	2009	Unknown at this time	Grants

Ph.D. in Water Resource Management and Hydrologic Sciences	Joint degree with UNLV, UNR, and DRI	2009	Unknown at this time	Grants
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In addition there are five new programs that are in early discussion stages but no formal proposals have been received and/or approved to move forward.

New Program Name	Brief Description	Date of Implementation	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources Outside of State Dollars
Ph.D. in Communication Studies	Interpersonal, rhetoric, public discourse	Unknown at this time	Preliminary discussion ongoing	Unknown at this time
M.S. in Professional Science	Provide education for non-academic science industry positions	Unknown at this time	Preliminary discussion ongoing	Private donors
Ph.D. in Addiction Counseling	Counselor Education, Nursing, Social Work, and Public Health to address local need	Unknown at this time	Preliminary discussion ongoing	Unknown at this time
Ph.D. in Counselor Education	Address needs for counselors	Unknown at this time	Preliminary discussion ongoing	Unknown at this time
M.S. in Athletic Training	Advanced education in athletic training	Unknown at this time	Preliminary discussion ongoing	Unknown at this time

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

As a comprehensive public university, UNLV supports research endeavors in all of its academic programs. However, the university community also strives to create research excellence in areas that are of importance to the Las Vegas metropolitan area and to the Southern Nevada region. As a result, the university has developed the following research goals, which were created through the university's strategic planning process:

- Identify and support areas of excellence in research, scholarship, and creative activity that build the institution's national and international reputation
- Stimulate research and scholarship in regionally relevant and emerging areas
- Improve and expand research services to faculty
- Increase research expenditures & technology transfer
- Bring to success major pending initiatives
- Support research that informs teaching and learning outcomes
- Promote the mutually beneficial nature of graduate education and research
- Aid economic diversification of the community, state, and region
- Enhance awareness of the value of research in the community and state

UNLV is the only research university in the Mojave Desert and in the metropolitan area of Southern Nevada. As a result, it is uniquely positioned to conduct research on subjects relevant to these two areas. Given its location within the boundaries of the Mojave Desert, UNLV seeks to be an internationally recognized institution in arid lands research, specifically focusing on research that examines the interaction of a rapidly growing metropolitan area with unique desert climates and landscapes. This includes research on water resources, renewable energy development, transportation, and architectural innovation in desert environments, to name a few. UNLV also conducts research on social, cultural, and economic issues associated with the populations and industries of the unique city of Las Vegas, including such issues as risk behavior, entertainment engineering, economic sustainability, public health, immigration, and social justice, among others.

In the 2008-2014 planning period, UNLV is focusing its efforts on transformational, team-driven research that addresses community, statewide and regional issues such as water resources, public health, urban growth, social well-being, transportation, and renewable energy. These are topics of critical importance and relevance to other rapidly urbanizing communities in the U.S. and other parts of the world, as well.

Toward that end, UNLV plans to make targeted faculty hires and expand existing research initiatives and sponsored program funding in the following areas (listed in approximate order of importance):

1. Renewable energy
2. Western climate change
3. Arid lands hydrology and water resources
4. Public health
5. Nanotechnology
6. Materials science
7. Radiation chemistry
8. High pressure physics & chemistry
9. Transportation engineering
10. Entertainment engineering
11. Biosafety & medical microbiology
12. Astrophysics
13. Environmental policy

The University continues to build administrative and programmatic infrastructure to support innovative research that translates into economic development for the state. The Office of Technology Transfer, working proactively to commercialize UNLV intellectual property, has focused on four areas with the greatest potential for commercialization: Alternative Energy, Biotechnology & Biosciences, Urban Sustainability, and Technology Innovation. Through a focused effort, the University's technology transfer office has attracted private-sector partners interested in establishing research-oriented business relationships with UNLV and has increased license revenues. Likewise, the UNLV Research Foundation has reorganized its efforts to attract tenants to the UNLV Harry Reid Research and Technology Park. The research park provides a business incubation environment in which UNLV researchers and members of the private sector can work together. The first tenants at the park are anticipated to move in during the 2008-2014 period.

In the area of environmental science, the University is restructuring and revitalizing the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies. Going forward under new leadership, the center will pursue a larger vision for environmental research, such as land-use dynamics, renewable energies, and water availability and quality. Greater emphasis will be placed on reorganizing the divisions within the HRC and increasing the center's competitive grant funding through new research areas, better marketing, industrial support, and increased integration with UNLV academic colleges.

UNLV also plans to expand its statewide collaborations with the University of Nevada-Reno and Desert Research Institute. Current and promising efforts are focused on area hydrology and a new EPSCoR initiative on climate change.

Despite statewide funding challenges, the University intends, as a key element of its strategic plan, to grow its research operation in the coming

years by expanding its sponsored program funding beyond the \$100 million mark.

STUDENT SERVICES

Campus Life

Starting in 2009, the new *Student Orientation, Advising and Registration* (SOAR) program will be mandatory for all new students. SOAR will be offered throughout April, May and summer with evening, one-day, two-day, and overnight programs.

The Offices of Student Involvement and Activities (SIA) and Student Diversity Programs and Services (SDPS) in conjunction with the College of Education have created a 24 credit *Leadership and Civic Engagement Minor*. Over the next two years, SIA and SDPS will continue to offer and teach all the classes available for this minor.

UNLV via the *Student of Concern Training* task force (SOCT) will facilitate a program for faculty and staff about students of concern. Institutional members will learn the reporting protocol as well as how to effectively work and/or refer students that may be in distress.

Development

Student Affairs Advisory Board - The Student Affairs Advisory Board is a committee made up of UNLV Alumni and community leaders. The purpose of the board is to advise the Division of Student Affairs' leadership, promote the division to the community, and help secure external funding for Student Affairs. It meets formally at least twice a year and members participate in many of the activities of the Division of Student Affairs. Members of the Student Affairs Advisory Board often serve as mentors for students and staff while also advising student organizations that they have an interest in at UNLV. A review of the Board's mission and scope will be conducted during the next year.

Enrollment and Student Services

College of Southern Nevada (CSN) Transfer Liaison: A CSN counselor has been identified and provided extra compensation to provide supplemental advising to prospective transfer students to UNLV. This initiative is intended to strengthen the relationship we have forged with the College of Southern Nevada in the interest of providing better information and support services for transfer students. This pilot project will serve to provide more in-depth information as to the barriers transfer

students face as they prepare for UNLV as well as possible interventions CSN and UNLV can employ to mitigate these barriers.

Hobson's Apply Yourself (AY) Application: This new initiative will provide UNLV with a new application for admission module for undergraduate and graduate students. This application will interface with the prospective student module as well as the Peoplesoft student information system, providing UNLV with a robust reporting resource to support strategic enrollment management initiatives.

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Recommendations: UNLV will continue to evaluate enrollment management programs and services and move to implement recommendations provided by AACRAO consultants in the Spring of 2008. These recommendations include a variety of initiatives and programs aimed at improving services to students in the recruitment, admissions and registrar's departments.

RebelCard Services Center

In 2009, the RebelCard will become a fully functional bank card allowing students the option to have access to their bank accounts.

Student Wellness

Student Wellness, an integrated health and counseling center, plans to increase its contribution to the academic mission of the UNLV through a number of initiatives. These initiatives include:

- Establishing the first American Psychological Association approved Pre-doctoral training program at a university in Nevada. This program will afford doctoral students in psychology at UNLV and UNR the possibility of staying in Nevada to complete their required year of pre-doctoral training
- Increasing involvement with research projects on campus through use of our clinical facility and the participation of our health care providers
- Collaborating with faculty to teach students about health, mental health, and wellness

Student Affairs Technology

Student Affairs Technology will build and support a Virtual server platform that will vastly improve the technological support of divisional

projects as well as provide significant savings. These savings will be realized by using a Virtual server platform that will support multiple applications versus the traditional one application/one server strategy.

CAEO

The Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach will continue to pursue federal funding for additional offerings in Upward Bound Math and Science Center, GEAR UP, Educational Talent Search, Student Support Services, Adult Educational Services and The McNair Scholars Program.

iNtegrate

The new Student Services Module (SSM) for the iNtegrate Project will transform how and when students communicate with the colleges and universities of the Nevada System of Higher Education and how faculty and Staff conduct the necessary business of meeting students' needs for accurate information, timely decisions, and informed choices that lead to student success. Service to the student as the consumer of our educational product will guide the construction and design of the Student Services Module (SSM).

Student service functions, including course registration, payment of fees, and financial aid, will be student-friendly and better serve students by streamlining process and eliminating duplicate efforts, supporting seamless transfer across the NSHE, and improving communication between faculty, staff, and students.

As on of the pilot campuses for the Project, UNLV is scheduled to have SSM fully implemented August 2010.

Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center will partner with the entire campus to both welcome and mentor students from pre-admission to First Year Programs to a successful graduation.

Providing:

- Academic Advising for students who are deciding their major area of focus, who are returning to higher education, and who are deciding to attend UNLV.
- Peer advising, student-to-student.
- Student athlete academic services that span academic advising for 17 intercollegiate sports.
- Workshops, seminars, and guest speakers throughout the academic year that address critical points of academic persistence,

such as time management, stress management, decision making, and career exploration.

- Academic testing resources that include the ACT residual test and proctoring services for corresponding testing.
- A class concierge service to maximize registration planning.
- And partnering with the campus to collaborate and culminate tailored student success initiatives.