



**FOCUS: 50 to 100
Education Town Hall**

October 19, 2007

**The Path to Excellence-Essential and Sustaining Actions
“The How” ---“not why we can’t but why not...”**

1. Integrate 5 to 10% critical thinking, socially relevant topics into many undergraduate and graduate classes (e.g. an essay creationism vs. evolution in a geography class).
2. Create a curriculum rich in practical experience such as service learning experiences where students learn in context by helping others (e.g. water well installation in Africa).
3. Require student peer review of each other’s writing (calibrated essays might be provided as examples of levels of grading as practiced in Chemistry at UCLA).
4. Develop graduate programs and courses that transcend institutional “silos” and reward administrators and faculty for supporting and implementing them (e.g., statewide, NSHE hydrology program).
5. Develop unified first-year experiences that prepare students with a common set of characteristics that must be achieved before entering a major. (Faculty might be assigned to teach across departments and colleges; and/or colleges might offer combined courses for their freshman students.)
 - > relax major requirements; and,
 - > require lower division courses be completed early in the student’s program.
 - > develop learning communities around specific themes and topics.
 - > develop Common Book program that requires all first-year students to read the same book prior to the beginning of the term.
6. Improve advising and the Student Information System to enforce the completion of common First-Year prerequisites before registration for other courses is allowed.
7. Identify courses that are not needed for a major, relax the major requirements accordingly, and improve universal general education requirements without increasing the total number of course credits required for graduation.

8. Incorporate the distinct location of UNLV as a laboratory for students with activities and projects that are mutually beneficial to students, UNLV, the community, and the world.
9. Create multi-level, multi-disciplinary collaborative activities between undergraduate and graduate students.
10. Develop trans/multi-disciplinary programs and activities that incorporate multiple colleges, departments, and groups (e.g., constructing a building that includes Architecture, Sociology, Psychology, Business, Law, etc.).
11. Create opportunities for various professors across disciplines to brainstorm about ideas and approaches that transcend their respective disciplinary areas to examine the total curriculum.
12. Create opportunities for teaching, mentoring and research collaborations among professors, graduate students, and undergraduate students.
13. Enhance internal communications and collaborations by connecting the dots between effective programs.
14. Create more capstone courses and combine disciplines on relevant projects.
15. Establish practice labs to solve world problems, write articles, create plays, etc.
16. Design and integrate, intentionally, curricular and co-curricular learning experiences---identify curricular and co-curricular intersections.
17. Require all students, graduate and undergraduate to have a research experience in their course of study. (NSF/EPSCOR funding available for undergraduate research opportunities)
18. Create a faculty development opportunity for faculty on how to integrate research appropriately scaled for undergraduate involvement.
19. Make the structural and reward system changes to support new approaches.