



## **FOCUS: 50 TO 100 Research Strategies**

**November 14, 2007**

Within a context of limited resources, determining research funding priorities require careful analysis and thorough consideration of the implications and impact of whatever decisions are made. The balance between large-scale research actions and current strengths is a critical issue to be resolved. Similarly, how departmental and local research interests and concerns are resolved and reconciled with state and regional research needs must be carefully considered.

Emphasizing high quality rather than quantity, research strengths should be methodically identified. Subsequently, strategies to advance UNLV's research status should be incremental with the initial goal of advancement to Tier 3 classification.

Effectiveness and efficiency will be enhanced and sustained with a more systemized collaborative model for research activity. Interdisciplinary research yields greater benefits than discipline independent initiatives. Creating value around research cooperation, therefore, is an imperative. Regardless of the research priorities that are identified, an environment in which everyone can participate must be created.

### **1. Develop mechanism for determining research priorities**

- > Strengthen and expand charge to Research Council beyond review of and advice on research policies to identifying research priorities.
- > Identify national funding streams to inform prioritization
- > Determine appropriate balance for prioritizing internal organic research interactivity generated from faculty interest versus a top-down-directed research build-out agenda.
- > Determine if the research initiative enhances brand equity.
- > Reconcile how to appropriately address state and regional research needs

### **2. Develop metrics and benchmarks to measure progress and provide accountability**

- > Identify best practices among research universities including Purdue
- > Establish a clearly articulated reward structure that defines the factors that are assessed and valued.
- > Establish strategies to elevate successful activities for investments.

**3. Promote and advance interdisciplinary; multidisciplinary; and, transdisciplinary research activity**

- > Identify the drivers that have been used to advance these relationships at other research universities
- > Review National Science Academy grant-funding guidelines to inform policy considerations.
- > Incorporate collaborative activity as a value in the faculty reward system.
- > Establish and support long-term aligned research teams among faculty
- > Create and maintain an up-to-date comprehensive database that captures faculty research activity and curriculum vitae to facilitate team collaborations across departments and colleges; consider commercial software to inventory and manage faculty activity and productivity.
- > Create/design physical space that facilitates faculty interactions outside of the classroom or individual laboratory (e.g. Science and Engineering building model; and, Faculty Club for casual exchanges)
- > Determine if and how transdisciplinary research activity among faculty with other universities should be valued.
- > Identify existing successful collaborative relationships on campus as models.
- > Establish a multitude of approaches for rewarding collaborations across campus
- > Review and consider EPSCOR incentives for multidisciplinary activities to inform our policies and procedures
- > Engage the Harry Reid Center as a catalyst for interdisciplinary research activities

**4. Recruit and retain faculty who are able to be successful in the UNLV research/academic environment**

- > Establish critical mass of faculty committed to and inspired by the UNLV research agenda

**5. Revise and enhance the faculty evaluation and reward system driven by a clearly articulated set of incentives.**

- > Reevaluate promotion and tenure policies and procedures to reflect current expectations and requirements
- > Align annual evaluation processes with merit allocations
- > Enhance feedback loop for untenured faculty
- > Establish formal mentoring program for untenured faculty
- > Ensure that department chairs are appropriately prepared to conduct effective performance evaluations
- > Revise and enhance Deans and Chairs' evaluations to assess and reward corresponding values.

- 6. Enhance communication networks at every level of the university to relay pertinent, timely information**
- 7. Support and enhance graduate programs**
  - > Revise and develop policies and procedures that support flexible course taking patterns as appropriate to facilitate progression through the program
  - > Enhance Graduate/Research Assistant Benefits package to be more competitive
- 8. Imbed research in undergraduate education**
  - > Identify strategies to link the research mission to the educational mission (e.g., PEW; Higher Education Round Table; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
- 9. Emphasize and promote a diversified research funding portfolio**
  - > Emphasize securing competitive grants rather than Federal earmarks.
  - > Identify private funding sources in consultation with the Foundation
  - > Emphasize and elevate public/private partnerships (e.g., contract work; entrepreneurial activities)
- 10. Develop and enhance collaborations and partnerships with local scientific entities in the surrounding community including:**
  - > Desert Research Institute
  - > Harry Reid Center
  - > EPA Labs