Purpose

The UNLV Black Professionals believe that a crisis situation exists for black professionals at the university. After more than 50 years of existence, the institution remains an isolating, often unsupportive, and sometimes overtly hostile environment for black professionals. The organization’s purpose is to provide a voice for articulating the collective concerns of black professionals at UNLV so as to confront this longstanding crisis in an active and constructive way. While the organization does not presume to represent every single black professional at UNLV, it nonetheless stands up and invites black professionals to engage in positive action through its efforts.

What We Dedicate Ourselves To

1. **The UNLV Black Professionals believe that black professionals should be represented horizontally in the University structure (administrative and academic) in numbers that are proportionate to their representation in the local community served by this institution.**

   Even though the numbers of black professionals at UNLV may represent the best of a dismal performance by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) in general, the UNLV Black Professionals do not believe that this performance should be applauded. In reference to local community demographics and the metropolitan nature of Las Vegas, the situation at UNLV is unacceptable and indefensible regardless of how poorly NSHE maybe doing elsewhere.

2. **The UNLV Black Professionals believe black professionals should also be represented vertically in the University structure (administrative and academic), and not to be entrenched disproportionately at lower-level positions.**

   In addition to the question of raw numbers, the relative position of black professionals must also be improved dramatically at UNLV. When one looks at the level of director and above for administrative professionals, and at the level of full professor for academic professionals at UNLV, black people essentially disappear. Even some of those in relatively senior positions are often rendered figureheads who lack the requisite authority to impact or implement policy decisions commensurate with their positions. Tokenism and the maintenance of glass ceilings are unacceptable practices in higher education.

3. **The UNLV Black Professionals believe that aggressive action must be taken to eliminate the gap existing currently between black entry-level and senior professionals (such as are to be found) at UNLV.**

   The administrative and academic pipelines leading to senior positions at UNLV have never been allowed to function naturally in the cases of black professionals. Instead, black professionals are either forced to leave the institution in an untimely fashion or are cemented in low- or mid-range positions from which they cannot advance. The extraordinarily low number of black faculty hired at assistant professor, tenured and promoted to associate professor, and then promoted to full professor since 1957 are a constant reminder of this inequity. The same
problem extends in regard to administrative professional, in which the few who are brought in are not able to rise to levels of prominence. More intensive recruiting, while necessary, cannot by itself solve this problem. Without aggressive action, the gap will remain for decades even under unrealistically excellent recruiting, hiring, and mentorship conditions.

4. The crisis situation at UNLV cannot be addressed without the institution acknowledging, taking responsibility for, and correcting the failure to retain black professionals over the years.

The broken administrative and academic advancement pipelines at UNLV are not an isolated phenomenon, but are the result of (1) a failure to recruit and hire enough black professionals, and (2) a failure to properly mentor and retain the few black professionals that have been brought in. The UNLV Black Professionals believe that retention of black professionals must receive the same emphasis that should be given to recruitment and hiring.

5. The UNLV Black Professionals believe that there should be more than a single NSHE Regent who takes an active interest in the issues, problems, and circumstances of black professionals and black students at UNLV.

With a board of thirteen members, the current representation in regard to the needs of black professionals and black students is not adequate.

General Means Of Action

- Serve as a reference point and resource for black professionals.
- Provide the administration with black professionals’ collective perspective and voice on policies and procedures.
- Serve as a resource to the Vice-President for Diversity and Inclusion, or whatever entity is responsible for EEO/AA at UNLV.
- Respond to administrative policies and procedures on behalf of black professionals.
- Serve as a disseminator and interpreter of information for black professionals.
- Provide professional networking and mentorship for black professionals.

Current Agenda Items in Addition to Those Listed in the Charter

1. Job description of the Vice-President for Diversity and Inclusion.

The UNLV Black Professionals believe that the job description of the Vice-President for Diversity and Inclusion should include Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) power, and should also indicate a strong compliance role. It should not be a position to conveniently blame for the institution’s diversity failures, but rather a position empowered to correct those failures and to prevent future failures.

2. EEO/AA Office.
The UNLV Black Professionals believe that lack of support given to this entity have led to some of the problems plaguing the institution in regard to diversity. We are concerned about this office in regard to its placement, power, structuring, and future support and operations.