As a senior at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), I have definitely learned some great skills and study habits throughout my college career. However, those habits were not made all at once and the process was not easy. As someone who never got to take a first-year seminar, I can really see the value in courses like COLA 100E that take the time to teach freshman about tips on how to study, use campus resources, manage time, and balance work, school, and health. Over the course of two years, I learned how to build a résumé, conduct an interview, do community service, use the library, manage stress, and much more. Now, freshman can learn all of these important skills their first semester.

The one thing I wish I had told myself when I was a freshman is that school is essential, and that being a good friend and taking time for family does not lose importance the moment you become a college student. Prioritizing the people that mean the most to you along with your education is something that can be easily neglected and hard to fix after four years of the same routine. Try to ensure that you find a balance for all of your priorities. Additionally, taking breaks is useful to prevent burn out and to help you enjoy your college experience. Going on trips during breaks, playing recreational sports, or just doing something you love can be fun ways to keep a positive mindset and push through those hard semesters. Moderation is key, but making yourself happy really helps with the endurance it takes to get that diploma.

One unexpected lesson I have learned is that even the classes you are not fond of still have...

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A Senior’s Perspective (CONTINUED)

...value and contribute to the college experience. Not better person. The Hixson-Lied Success Scholars Program has taught me how to be a leader and give back to my community as well as equipping me with skills I will need as an adult. I have really had time to discover myself and what kind of person I want to be, and what kind of impact I want to have on society. I have friends I hope to have for life that I never would have known otherwise. This scholarship program helped me accomplish things that would have been very difficult without the support of mentors that thrive on showing students that ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things.

THE UNLV CO-CURRICULAR PROJECT ELEVATES STUDENTS AND THE FILM DEPARTMENT

By: Brenna Spector, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

The UNLV Film Program boasts a unique opportunity called the Co-Curricular Film Project, which allows students to have special hands on access into the inner workings of the film industry. Founded by the Film Department Chair, Professor Francisco Menendez, it has been growing and aiding students in their careers since 1990.

Upon his arrival at UNLV, Prof. Menendez felt that the film department needed to add something that the world of theater is regularly acclimated to. In live theater, students are accustomed to working with faculty that serve as directors, set design, and real actors that work along with students. Twenty years ago, the nature of the film program was rather insular and mostly up to the students to make their own film. Collaboration was minimal and not highly present. Prof. Menendez sought to develop the Co-Curricular Film Project, which enhanced collaboration and resources for bigger budget projects. The ultimate aim was to give students opportunities, experiences, and resources that could not be gained shooting regular student films. As part of the program, students are involved in the pre-production, principal photography, and post-production phases of a short or feature film directed by Prof. Menendez. It is a three credit commitment each semester for students who continue until the film is completely finished.

Films produced from the Co-Curricular Film Project have greatly benefited students and the UNLV film department. The program began to take off in 1999 when “Medio Tiempo” was awarded the President’s Planning Initiative Award Grant for UNLV that allowed increased budgets for future films. It was critically acclaimed at the Latino International Film Festival and CineVegas Film Festival. Additionally, it was given a ten year contract on cable when it won The Showtime Latino Filmmaker Showcase in 2001.

The Co-Curricular’s first feature film, “Primo,” was the first film to move to Hi-Definition to give students a new edge. It also won the Planning Initiative Award and featured major actors such as Henry Darrow and Ilia Volok to make the experience...
Discover an Appetite for a Deeper Knowledge

By: Brendon Herzig, Hixson-Lied Scholar

For me, you will never find a deeper meaning than wandering a local museum and taking time to stop, look, and understand the detail in a particular piece. UNLV students have a great opportunity to share in that experience at the Marjorie Barrick Museum. You will find this free museum located on the UNLV campus near the Lied Library on Harmon Avenue, costing you only the time you wish to spend. The museum features rotating exhibitions of contemporary art and artifacts. Currently, the “Yesterday and Today Exhibition” is open all hours the museum is open until the exhibit ends on May 30th.

The exhibit consists of basketry for gathering and storing by the Southern Paiute and the Western Shoshone people as a visible manifesto. When you first enter, the exhibit is located in the back left corner. As you look, the items you see begin to develop into more than what is simply before you. Allow your mind to understand what the pieces symbolize, the time it took to create them, the colors, and the items’ use. Located within the exhibit are multiple books offering insight into the Paiute people. You create your own experience by being open to the meaning behind the pieces. Opening the books and reading information on the basketry itself broadened my understanding of the people and culture. Taking another walk around after reading through some of the books provided helped me to discover the real beauty of the exhibit. It changes the physical forms of a basket or a canteen, into a myriad of colors, materials, textures and shapes.

The experience inspired my inner museum enthusiast and an overall appreciation for the exhibit. Exhibits like this expose you to the indigenous histories of Nevada. The artifacts become a connection to the beliefs and traditions of these historic cultures. The “Yesterday and Today Exhibition” benefits the UNLV community by delivering information about the native peoples’ culture. It communicates the changing vitality of the native people and their resilience to continue. This exhibit can be underscores the University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULO’s). Intellectual Breadth and Lifelong learning includes the ability to reflect and expand on one’s own understanding, which is one way this exhibit can play a role in your lifelong studies. The “Yesterday and Today Exhibition” expands on Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness of the world, linking perspectives to identity, and experiences of different cultures.

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Discover an Appetite for a Deeper Knowledge Continued

This exhibit increases the awareness of one’s own place in the world and possible influence. This is not the only exhibit that can increase your awareness of historical and cultural diversity. This space rotates multiple exhibits throughout the year displaying different collections of historical piece manifestos. For example, opening March 20th is the “If a 6 Turned Out To Be 9” exhibit that will offer another opportunity to open your mind. If you aren’t able to make this exhibit, I recommend that you catch one of the many other exhibits to be hosted in the Marjorie Barrick Museum.

Working the Workshops

By: Kelly Lutzker, Hixon-Lied Success Scholar

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is an epicenter of all kinds of resources that are beneficial to the everyday college student who may need a little bit of help. Through the doors of the Library, the Writing Center, and the Academic Success Center, students have a variety of different, skill-enhancing workshops at their disposal that are available throughout the semester. The month of March is no exception. Listed below are a few of the numerous workshops open to the students.

MLA Style
Provided by: Jacquie Elkouz
When and Where: Monday, March 2 from 2:00 to 2:50pm in the Student Union, Room 205
Purpose: This workshop is dedicated to helping the student master MLA style formatting that some professors require for essays or research projects they assign.

Writing a Research Paper
Provided by: Regina Dickerson
When and Where: Tuesday, March 3 from 2:00 to 2:50pm in the Student Union, Room 205
Purpose: Every college student is bound to get assigned at least one major research paper to do. This workshop will guide the student in all the necessary steps it takes to complete a well-written research paper.

How to Avoid Plagiarism
Provided by: Jacquie Elkouz
When and Where: Thursday, March 5 from 2:00 to 2:50pm in the Student Union, Room 209
Purpose: Plagiarism is a serious issue among the academic community and is not tolerated at UNLV. However, some students may do it accidentally. This workshop will teach them how to properly use and cite information in order to avoid plagiarism.

Time Management: Plan Ahead
Provided by: Heather Hatch
When and Where: Monday, March 16 from 2:30 to 3:30pm in the Student Union, Room 205
Purpose: This workshop is focused primarily on how to juggle all your responsibilities and get things done, neatly, efficiently, and on time.

Study Skills: Train Your Brain
Provided by: Heather Hatch
When and Where: Thursday, March 19 from 10:00am to 11:00am in the Student Union, Room 209
Purpose: Studying can be a difficult thing to do. It is not particularly fun and can be mind-numbing and time consuming if you don’t know how to do it properly. This workshop will provide you ways that will make your studying time more effective.

Study Skills: Tips for Test Success
Provided by: Heather Hatch
When and Where: Thursday, March 26 from 10:00am to 11:00am in the Student Union, Room 205
Purpose: Tests are a dreaded but inevitable part of the college experience. The looming date of a test can bring about peaked levels of
Professional Spotlight: Dr. Brandy Smith

By: Natalie Costa, Hixson-Lied Scholar

The Academic Success Center (ASC) highlights the newest addition to their staff, Business and Academic Operations Manager, Dr. Brandy Smith. Dr. Smith is a native Nevadan, raised in Boulder City, which lead her to become a student here at UNLV. During her undergraduate career, she majored in Business Management and continued on to receive her MBA, where her focus was on New Venture Management. Afterward, she went on to earn a Ph.D. in Higher Education Leadership.

Dr. Smith spent some time working with the ASC as a COLA 100E First-Year Seminar instructor, where she had the opportunity to help students explore the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed as an undergraduate. Coming from the College of Education, her work as a first-year seminar instructor allowed her to explore another area within higher education. Throughout her career, she has completed research on organizational change, finance, and student persistence within higher education. Presently, she is working on a study regarding the perceptions of students, faculty, and staff as an institution transitions into having Minority Serving Institution status.

In her role as the Business and Academic Operations Manager of the ASC, Dr. Smith’s job entails working with budgets and financial projections, as well as collaborating with the ASC team on student success initiatives. When asked about her favorite part of the job she stated, “I really enjoy the positive working environment. Also, it’s my mission to help students achieve success and make a difference in their lives throughout their college experience.”

When she is not working, she spends her free time at home and on the soccer field with her two teenagers. She enjoys swimming and reading a good book. A fun fact about Dr. Smith is that she is scuba diving certified and last year she participated in a sprint triathlon in Boulder City. Her favorite quote is by Mother Teresa which states, “Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.” Dr. Brandy Smith embodies this quote through her daily activities and career goals.