UNLV

**Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report
September 1, 2020**

**Prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges
and Universities**

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A.   Institutional Overview

The constitution of the State of Nevada authorizes the state legislature to establish institutions of higher education to be controlled by a board of regents. The Nevada Revised Statutes indicate that the institutions are to be administered by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is one of eight institutions of the Nevada System of Higher Education, which consists of two doctoral-granting universities, one state college, four comprehensive community colleges, and one environmental research institute. The Board of Regents (BOR) governs the system in a manner similar to a corporate board of directors. The board leadership is comprised of a chair and vice chair who are elected by the board's membership. Thirteen board members are elected from districts defined by the Nevada legislature to serve a six-year term and terms are staggered to ensure continuity. The regents set policies and approve budgets for Nevada's entire system of higher education. Working on behalf of the board is Chancellor Dr. Melody Rose, who serves as NSHE's chief executive officer, develops NSHE strategies, and implements board policy. The institutional presidents report to the chancellor.

UNLV is organized into the following academic units:
- The Colleges of Education, Engineering, Fine Arts, Honors, Hospitality, Liberal Arts, Sciences, Urban Affairs
- The Schools of Business, Law, Dental Medicine, Medicine, Integrated Health Sciences, Public Health, Nursing
- The Graduate College
- The Division of Educational Outreach
- The Academic Success Center
- University Libraries

In addition to the academic units, several other units, including the Office of Diversity Initiatives, Business Affairs, Student Affairs, Research and Economic Development, and Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement work cooperatively to support the major functions of the university. The university offers artistic, cultural, health, and technical resources and opportunities to the community it serves and its annual impact to southern Nevada's economy was $2.51 billion in 2019. The addition of the School of Medicine will add an estimated $800 million a year by 2025 and more than one billion a year by 2030 in economic impact. UNLV promotes research programs and creative activities by students and faculty that respond to the needs of an urban community in a desert environment.

The institution has more than 30,000 students and offers more than 200 degree and certificate programs through 16 schools and colleges. Under the governance of NSHE, UNLV is required to have an individual strategic plan, as are the other NSHE institutions. UNLV's strategic plan, referred to as *Top Tier*, appendix 1, must clearly reflect the overarching goals of the system's plan while also establishing more specific goals, targets, and direction based on the institution's

overall mission and service area.

UNLV is ranked number eight[1] in the U.S. News & World Report's annual *Campus Ethnic Diversity* listing of diverse universities for undergraduates. The university has placed in the top 10 for the past eight years and continues to show its commitment to serving a diverse population and building the future for Las Vegas and Nevada. In 2012, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas achieved designation from the Department of Education as a Title III & Title V Minority Serving Institution (MSI). In 2015, UNLV achieved designations as an Asian-American and Native-American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

As indicated by these designations, UNLV is a diverse institution which is a source of pride. Based on that diversity, UNLV does not have specific goals to increase the diversity of the student population but strives to improve the service to students each year. The Top Tier Strategic Plan, appendix 1, page 19 of the PDF, numbered page 18 in the report) does monitor the enrollment distribution, distribution of degrees, number of students earning degrees, and the graduation rates by race/ethnicity. Information by gender is available on the Decision Support website[2].

The Board of Regents decided to proceed with the search for a permanent president in the summer of 2020. Interviews were held the week of July 20, 2020 and Dr. Keith Whitfield was selected to receive an offer. Dr. Whitfield was offered a four-year contract, accepted, and began on August 24, 2020. Dr. Whitfield comes from Wayne State University in Detroit, where he was the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and a professor of Psychology. Wayne State University's student population is also highly diverse and they are well known for their efforts to support their diverse students and close achievement gaps. Thus, Dr. Whitfield brings relevant leadership experience and a record of success in supporting students to UNLV.

Prior to Dr. Whitfield being hired, effective July 1, 2018, the NSHE Board of Regents appointed Dr. Marta Meana as acting president. Dr. Meana has been with UNLV since 1997 as a professor of psychology and in 2012 began serving as dean of the Honors College. Dr. Meana has been a vocal advocate for the Top Tier Strategic Plan and the university's core themes. Her appointment as acting president provided continuity in strategic and accreditation efforts. The president reports to the chancellor and through the chancellor to the board of regents. The president has a cabinet that meets bi-weekly. Its mission is to provide advice and counsel to the president on matters regarding policies, procedures, and strategic planning.

In 2019, Senior Vice Provost Dr. Chris Heavey was appointed Interim Executive Vice President and Provost (EVP & P or provost). Dr. Heavey and the vice presidents are responsible for assisting the president in the administration of the university. The EVP & P is the chief academic and budget officer for the campus and is responsible for overseeing and aligning academic and budgetary policy and priorities, ensuring the quality of the faculty and student body, expanding the research enterprise, and assisting in progress toward meeting the BOR goal of increasing institutional quality through measurable improvements in academic programs and accreditation.

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[1] https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/slideshows/see-the-most-diverse-national-universities?slide=8, May 20, 2020.

[2] https://ir.unlv.edu/IAP/Reports/Content/RetentionSummaries.aspx

The position reports to the president and serves collaboratively with the president as chief academic officer and chief administrative officer. The deans of the academic units report to the EVP & P.

UNLV has faced challenging circumstances since March 2020, as have all institutions of higher education in the country. First the COVID-19 pandemic required closing the campus and conducting operations remotely. There were also enormous job losses in Nevada and corresponding reduction in state tax revenue. Las Vegas, like other city across the country, has experienced demonstrations against racial and social injustice. In order for the NWCCU peer evaluators to understand how UNLV is coping with, and responding to these challenging situations, the following sections address how the campus has worked to continue to educate its students, transition to remote education, maintain the health and safety of all employees, and continue to fulfill its mission: Institutional Response to the COVID-19 pandemic; State of Nevada Budget; Racial and Social Equity.

1. **Outstanding Recommendations**

UNLV has no outstanding recommendations with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

2. **Institutional Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

On March 13, 2020, the United Sates declared a national emergency caused by COVID-19. Based on directives from the Governor of Nevada and the Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education, on March 15, 2020 the UNLV President instructed the university to transition to remote instruction beginning on March 23, 2020 which was immediately after the conclusion of spring break. The campus also suspended all but essential in-person services effective March 18, 2020 and employees were asked to perform their functions remotely as much as possible. This section summarizes the most salient aspects of UNLV's ongoing response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The Executive Vice President and Provost and the Emergency Management Coordinator convened the Incident Management Team (IMT), a campus-wide task force responsible for managing UNLV's response to the COVID-19 crisis. The IMT, chaired by the Executive Vice

The **Hixson-Lied Scholarship Program** is a $2,500 scholarship program for students who have overcome challenging life circumstances and have maintained high academic standards. Participants attend monthly professional development meetings, perform service hours, meet with an Academic Success Coach, contribute to a monthly newsletter, serve as a peer mentor in COLA 100E classes, and maintain full-time academic status with a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA. Scholarship eligibility includes being admissible to UNLV or have a 3.0 cumulative GPA at UNLV, be a full-time undergraduate student, be classified as a resident of Nevada, display financial need based on Pell-grant standards, and demonstrate academic, personal, and/or financial challenges as documented in the application essay.

President and Provost, consists of 35 representatives from major administrative and academic units across the university. The IMT established six working groups to focus on specific aspects of resuming university operations and in-person instruction and it develops guidelines and protocols that apply university-wide, identifies which decisions are made at the unit-level, and reviews unit activity plans for resuming (or continuing) on-campus operations.

In March, 2020, UNLV's Division of Integrated Marketing and Branding created the [Novel Coronavirus – COVID-19 website](#)[3], which is updated regularly with information about operations as the university responds to the pandemic. The site contains information for students, parents, academic faculty and instructors, staff, and the public. It includes helpful links to articles, videos, and websites that offer relevant information. A link to this website appears at the top of the [UNLV website index page](#)[4], and at the bottom of every UNLV webpage maintained by Web and Digital Strategy. The President and EVP & P send official communications to the campus community through the UNLV Official and/or the Student Official email, which reach all UNLV employees and students. In addition, the Office of Public Affairs addresses questions from students, parents, faculty, staff, and the general public through the coronavirus@unlv.edu email address.

The President, EVP & P, Faculty Senate Chair, and a faculty member from the School of Public Health hosted virtual Town Hall meetings to answer questions related to COVID-19 submitted by UNLV faculty and staff. The faculty member is an epidemiologist with extensive experience conducting outbreak investigations and implementing public health informatics systems, and serves on the Nevada Governor's five-member statewide task force advising him on the scientific aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the town halls, conducted in mid-May and late June, was to address questions, maintain an open dialogue, and obtain additional input from the university community about the plans for resuming on-campus operations.

After the COVID-19 crisis forced the campus to switch completely to remote instruction in late March, several students indicated that they could not continue participating in their courses because they did not have access to a computer or to the Internet at home. To assist these students, the university established the *Laptop Loaner Program* in mid-March 2020. This is a joint program between the Lied Library and the Office of Information Technology. The devices are checked out as if they were library books to ease the tracking and to ensure that the institution has the ability to get them back. The university purchased 315 laptops. T-Mobile donated 50 T-Mobile (internet) Hotspots, and agreed to split the monthly operational cost of these devices with the university. Students have not yet been asked to return the hotspots as they will likely be used through the fall 2020 semester. Additional hotspots have been ordered to accommodate fall needs, with the possibility of another order. Some computer on-campus labs were made available online so students could remotely access specialized software needed for some courses.

When the President announced that all courses had to transition to remote instruction beginning

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[3] https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus
[4] https://www.unlv.edu/

on March 23, 2020, the [Faculty Center][5] worked with personnel from [Online Education][6] and [Information Technology][7] to develop a plan to offer drop-in help to instructors during Spring Break (March 16-22, 2020). A team of instructional designers, information technology, and faculty members were available to assist individuals and small groups who needed help with getting started with WebCampus/Canvas (UNLV's learning management system), Cisco Webex meetings, creating videos with Panopto, setting up assignments online, etc.

The Faculty Center has offered and continues to offer various webinars to support faculty in the transition to remote teaching and these events are promoted in the weekly Faculty Center newsletter and on their website.

The Office of Online Education identified the four members of the Embedded Instructional Technologist team as the main group that would assist instructors. The team organized and delivered multiple training sessions to help instructors with the transition. Overall, Online Education helped improve 504 sections representing 268 unique courses.

To prepare summer and fall 2020 courses for remote instruction, Online Education expanded the breadth and scope of the trainings available to instructors. Eleven topics were offered 69 times throughout the summer. In addition, a series of accountability groups was organized to help instructors improve their WebCampus/Canvas course shells. Faculty with advanced experience in online teaching in seven UNLV colleges/schools mentored peer cohorts by facilitating the *Online Teaching Essentials* course. A version of the course was also offered to all graduate teaching assistants. Because remote instruction will continue in summer and fall 2020, the Provost's Office offered a payment of $500 to any instructor scheduled to teach a course in the fall (ladder-rank faculty, lecturers, graduate assistants, part-time instructors) who participated in training sessions during the summer to improve their online teaching skills.

Information Technology developed the [Teaching Remotely for Instructors][] website, which includes most of the resources available to instructors. Together, the Faculty Center, Online Education, and Information Technology continue to develop resources and documentation to help faculty members teach and work remotely.

Before all courses switched to remote instruction on March 23, 2020, the EVP & P distributed to the deans a spreadsheet listing all the spring 2020 courses offered by their respective colleges/schools. The document allowed deans to track the progress to maintain academic continuity, to think about the transition at the individual course level, and to identify instructors who needed additional support transitioning to remote instruction. Results are available in appendix 2.

Following the transition to remote instruction in mid-March 2020, student support services (e.g., Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory policy, academic advising, financial aid, fall 2020 registration) were also offered remotely. Student feedback, however, suggested that some students did not know how to access those services, or which office to contact first. In response, the Division of Student

[5] https://www.unlv.edu/facultycenter
[6] https://www.unlv.edu/teach-online
[7] https://www.it.unlv.edu/teaching-working-remotely

Affairs launched the Student Help Form to connect students with support resources effectively. The form asks students to briefly describe their concern. Numerous individuals from across the university respond to those messages and direct students to the appropriate area for help.

The form is embedded on every UNLV page that carries the *Updates on the Coronavirus* banner. This is a link to an example of the form[8]. The form proved to be a valuable way to de-escalate issues while connecting students with appropriate resources.

In late March 2020, the Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education instructed all NSHE institutions to make the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading option available to all students for the spring 2020 semester. This action provided flexibility to students in light of campus closures and changes in course content delivery caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. UNLV also extended its deadline to drop or completely withdraw from classes from April 3 to April 10, 2020 to allow students as much flexibility as possible in making decisions about their spring courses.

Graduate petitions for a change of grading basis were initiated by students in consultation with their faculty advisor and graduate coordinator, to understand the impact on GPA and degree requirements, and with the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office to understand the impact on loans and awards.

To assess student and faculty perspectives about the impact of the forced and sudden transition to remote instruction in late March 2020, one department (Art) and two colleges (Education, Engineering) conducted separate surveys of students and/or faculty in April 2020. The questionnaires identified some of the challenges that faculty and students encountered after the switch to distance education (e.g., access to technology, adequate communications, concerns about academic integrity, opportunities to remain connected with the instructor and with other students, time management), and the survey results were shared with the faculty of the respective academic units, and with the Office of the EVP & P. Because numerous courses were offered remotely in summer and fall 2020, faculty used the survey results to modify their courses to provide a better educational experience in the online environment. Various units (e.g., Faculty Center, Information Technology, Online Education) relied on the survey results to revise the content of existing workshops, or to design new workshops on remote teaching and learning.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of March 2020 is a $2 trillion economic, federal relief package intended to protect US individuals from the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The diverse UNLV committee tasked with distributing CARES Act funds created three distribution groups. CARES Act funding was distributed to Title IV-eligible students, and institutional funds were distributed to students who were not Title IV-eligible. In total, 16,626 students (totaling $11.3M) were awarded CARES funding, and 650 students (totaling $487,500) received institutional funding.

COVID-19 testing became available to the community on March 24, 2020 at a UNLV Medicine faculty practice office on Charleston Boulevard. In May 2020, another testing site became

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[8] https://www.unlv.edu/students

available on the UNLV main campus. Both locations were supported by the Nevada National Guard.

In late May 2020, the Provost's Office released the *Best Practices for Reopening Campus During the COVID-19 Pandemic,*[9], which provides a reference for the UNLV community to answer many of the questions elicited by the university's efforts to return to campus, and to address campus and workplace safety. The website encapsulates much of the coordination that was conducted by the Incident Management Team to ensure the safety of the university community, and describes recommended best practices to achieve that end.

In preparation for Step 2 of the process to resume on-campus operations, Integrated Graphic Services (IGS) and Integrated Marketing and Branding developed a portfolio of UNLV-specific COVID-19 graphics and signage (e.g., hand-washing, social distancing, wearing face covering, and regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces) available at no cost to campus units. The full catalog[10] is online, and the materials can be ordered from the website, or by email or telephone. Although initially scheduled to occur earlier, progression to Step 2 in the reopening process ended up being pushed back to August 10, 2020.

Faculty and deans were asked to identify fall 2020 courses (including laboratory sections) that could be moved to remote instruction. All classes of 75 or more students were converted to remote instruction. The initial goal was to reach a 50:50 combination of in-person and remote courses that allowed for 50% or lower density of occupied classroom seats in the fall. The university began with about 23% of courses online, due to instructor requests. The Registrar's Office staggered sections that use standard time slots in three different variations per time slot to reduce the number of students in hallways at the same time. Throughout summer and fall 2020, UNLV continued to assess the appropriateness of its operating procedures, including the safety of in-person instruction. Ultimately, the balance of courses online rose to almost 80%, with only about 20% starting the semester in-person. This balance may continue to shift further in the direction of online course as the semester progresses in response to conditions on campus and in the community.

Additional details for the various sections on COVID-19 response are available in Appendix 3.

3. State of Nevada Budget

In the state of Nevada, the tourism industry is the largest employer and that includes the hugely profitable convention industry. The current pandemic has greatly impacted Las Vegas and the entire state as the state is dependent on tourism for the majority of its tax revenue. The most recent unemployment rate available is for July 2020 and was reported to be 14% by the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. Throughout this crisis Nevada has generally had the highest unemployment rate in the nation.

In June of 2020, the governor of Nevada required all institutions within the Nevada System of

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[9] https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/best-practices
[10] https://www.unlv.edu/igs/covid-19

Higher Education to absorb a 4.5% cut in its current fiscal year (FY) 20 budget. The majority of that cut was satisfied through salary savings from unfilled positions.

The Nevada state legislature ended a special session on July 20, 2020. The session was convened to distribute budget cuts to each state entity in order to mitigate the loss of state revenue. The effect on the FY21 UNLV budget, which began on July 1, 2020, is a $95.5 million reduction in state support to the university. UNLV will see a $50.5 million, or 19.7 percent, cut to its original FY21 budgeted appropriation and a $45 million capital improvement budget was zeroed out, eliminating funding for the planned Medical Education and Engineering buildings.

To address the shortfalls created by the budget cuts, the university is adopting three strategies:
- Leveraging one-time funds from the federal CARES Act and NSHE investment pool earnings
- Instituting a hiring freeze and operating budget cuts identified by deans and vice presidents
- Implementing a per credit hour surcharge for the 2020-2021 academic year ($6 for undergraduate students, $8 for graduate and professional students); per the NSHE Board of Regents, all institutions will implement this temporary surcharge.

The budget approved by the legislature also requires six furlough days for state employees, which includes classified staff, between January 1 and June 30, 2021. It is anticipated that the NSHE Board of Regents will implement equivalent furloughs for academic and administrative faculty and provide more information to the institutions as early as September 2020.

A group of private donors has gathered more than $155 million in pledges for the Medical Education Building which will serve as the UNLV School of Medicine permanent campus. It is anticipated that the project will be able to move forward despite the withdrawal of state support at this time.

4. Racial and Social Equity

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, recognizes that a student body that is diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class background, sexual orientation, gender identity, and geography among other dimensions of cultural difference benefits and enriches the educational experiences of all students, faculty and staff. The presence and achievement of students from historically underrepresented groups not only benefits these students individually, but also enhances the educational and interpersonal experiences of everyone in the campus community.

The recent events spurred by the death of George Floyd have elicited a strong response from the Las Vegas community. UNLV stands in solidarity with local, national and international organizations and individuals who call for justice and action against systemic oppression and violence. In addition to President Meana's message of solidarity, several campus entities and groups such as, the UNLV Faculty Senate, the Graduate College, the UNLV Faculty Center, the Black Professional Women's Alliance of UNLV, The Intersection, and Student Diversity & Social Justice released statements condemning systemic racism.

The President and Executive Vice President and Provost held several virtual Town Hall meetings for all faculty and staff. The first was on May 11, 2020 and the second was on June 23, 2020. The meetings have included numerous leaders and experts, such as the Chief Diversity Officer; Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer; the immediate Past and Present Chairs of the Faculty Senate; Senior Vice President/CFO; Vice President for Student Affairs; and Dr. Brian Labus from the School of Public Health who serves on the governor's five-member statewide task force to help advise on the scientific aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The president and provost provided brief introductory remarks and updates on the pandemic as it affects students, faculty, and staff. Another important topic addressed was the budget cuts, efforts not to eliminate academic programs, faculty, or staff, and the upcoming furloughs expected to be initiated by the state legislature in July, retroactive to July 1, 2020. The remainder of the time was spent answering questions submitted through the virtual meeting question function.

During the June Town Hall, President Meana spoke about the restructuring of the President's Advisory Council giving student groups more opportunity for input; implementing best practices the university learned from the University of Oregon's Search Advocate program for recruiting more faculty of color; she also mentioned continuing and more frequent ongoing dialogue with Black student organizations; as well as addressing policing concerns on campus by reiterating the policy prohibiting chokeholds and similar force with all officers; implementing changes in the police training academy; creating a Citizen Review Board; refreshing the Police Advisory Board; and conducting a policy review of University Police Services.

On July 7, 2020, President Meana and Provost Heavey released the follow statement with more details on the task force and upcoming actions:

Dear University Community,

The last month or so has been profoundly painful for our university, our community, and our nation. The long history and recent string of killings of unarmed African Americans have finally brought about a moment of reckoning that needs to persist past the immediate reflection and protests.

Black Lives Matter. Now and forever.

Through all the pain and heartbreak, it is abundantly clear that our society has not made sufficient progress to combat systemic racism and racial injustice – that all members of our community do not enjoy equal freedoms or protections, and that all members of our community still do not have equal opportunity.

As a campus that prides itself on the diversity of our population, UNLV must be at the forefront of efforts to increase access and opportunity for individuals of color and others traditionally underrepresented in higher education. We must support every member of our UNLV family and help everyone attain their educational goals and professional objectives.

UNLV has been working to address some of these challenges in the last couple of years, with multiple campus offices working in coordination to develop programs and activities to counter racism and hate, to promote inclusion and understanding, to build a culture of community-oriented policing, and to improve our support of our students, faculty, and staff of color. But there is much more we can and will do.

UNLV

To fully encompass the multiple ways in which we can and must do more, we listened to Black students, faculty, and staff to help us forge a plan of action that allows UNLV to be part of the solution and a thought leader on this critical issue.

To that end – and as mentioned during the June 23 virtual town hall for faculty and staff – we have convened an Anti-Black Racism Task Force to proactively address issues at our university, educate the campus community, and collaboratively develop an action plan.

As leaders of UNLV, we commit to the following actions, upon the recommendation of the task force:
- Denounce racism and Black racism during UNLV Creates and student orientations.
- Create a website specifically for the task force with administrative support to facilitate its communications to campus.
- Sponsor and administratively support on-campus workshop(s) to certify members of the faculty/staff in specialized training for Intercultural Development Inventory and Intercultural Conflict Style as we begin the re-entry process to campus.
- Work with the Faculty Senate Chair, Chair of the Senate's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, and task force members to develop support initiatives for current African American/Black Faculty.
- Expand internal and external mental health services for our Black community focused on their specific experience – particularly for students – as well as integrate culturally competent and trauma-informed care into all mental health services.
- Review and develop protocols for when University Police Services will engage students who are gathering for protests and for responding to non-life-threatening incidents:

    - With task force consultation, implement a Citizen Review Board composed of students, faculty, staff and at-large community members by the start of the 2020 Fall Semester that will review disciplinary actions by university police.

    - With task force consultation, implement a Police Advisory Board composed of students, faculty, staff and at-large community members by the start of the 2020 Fall Semester that will provide input to university police on operations and (university) community interaction.
- Implement the Search Advocate Program that has shown to result in the hiring of more faculty of color.
- Hire a cluster of scholars – once the hiring freeze is lifted – whose research, teaching, and service is dedicated to combatting racism and increasing social justice; and expand the African American and African Diaspora Studies program.

In spring 2020, UNLV administered the National Assessment of College Campus Climate (NACCC) through the University of Southern California's Race and Equity Center. The survey was distributed to all enrolled UNLV students, and 20% of them responded. Results are expected this fall, and then, the Center's Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Shaun Harper, will facilitate workshops with faculty, staff, and students to discuss the results.

A new administrative unit, Student Diversity and Social Justice (SDSJ), opened in fall 2018. The creation of this administrative unit was a direct result of advocacy from students. Program coordinators developed and delivered programs and services to students based on broad identity groups. Four coordinator's programs focused on marginalized identity groups: 1) Latinx, 2)

Black/African American, and 3) Native American, and 4) LGBTQ and Gender. The fifth, Global Programs Coordinator, focused on programs and services for international students.

During SDSJ's 2018-2019 inaugural year, 85 student events were offered with more than 9,000 participants (redundant headcount) with a diversity or social justice focus (see table below). During the 2019-20 academic year, 79 events were offered with attendance of 9,762, and the department overall produced another 100 events with attendance of 4,097. The total attendance at all SDSJ events in 2019-20 exceeded 13,000. For the events and workshops, staff collaborated with more than 10 community organizations, 20 academic departments and offices, 35 student organizations, and 40 university committees.

Table 1, Diversity and Social Justice Programs 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 Academic Years

Program Coordinator	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2018-2019	2019-2020
APIME[11] & International	24	18	6205	458
Black/African American	15	23	722	3002
Latinx	21	16	921	5042
LGBTQ & Gender	14	12	295	903
Native American	11	10	983	357
TOTAL	85	79	9126	9762

During 2019-2020, SDSJ expanded programming around the identity groups and developed resource guides. Two resource guides were completed in fall 2019: Black/African Diaspora and Latinx. One is provided as an example, appendix 4. Others were still in development at the time of this writing. For transgender students, a resource sheet was created to guide them how to change their names in the student information system.

For the 2019-20 academic year, SDSJ produced six monthly calendars of events for identity-based programs featured that month, including APIME Heritage Month (April 2020, so all events were online), Black History Month, Latinx Heritage Month, LGBTQIA+ Pride Month, Native American Heritage Month, and Womxn's Herstory Month.

Identity-based events occurred throughout the year as part of a series, which included APIME Meet Ups, Hate/Uncycled, Know Your Rights, #TheFutureIsAccessible, and QTPOC Meetups. Recognizing the imperative for SDSJ to consider how its programs and services relate to the success of students from historically underserved populations at UNLV, the staff of the department have worked with Student Affairs Strategic Planning and Assessment (SPA) during 2019-20 to enhance data collection and formulate an assessment plan that includes a review of retention for participants.

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[11] Asian, Pacific Islander, & Middle Eastern

SDSJ adapted approximately 20 events, programs, or services for remote delivery during the shelter-at-home phase of the global coronavirus emergency, including the *Queer Pen Pal Project* for LGBTQ students, *REMixed Week* for multiracial students, *#NativeTongue* for Native American students, and *We Outchea!!!* which was a Facebook Live event organized so that students could "drop in" and chat with SDSJ staff and visit with one another in order to relieve some of the solitude and/or trepidation felt by sheltering at home. The entire APIME heritage month calendar of events transitioned to remote delivery, so planned events could proceed but in a virtual format. Graduation celebrations planned for the broad identity groups to occur on May 14, 2020 were adapted for remote participation, so graduating students could still celebrate the achievement of their degrees.

UNLV's [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) supports students with disabilities through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. Specialists focus on disabilities or assistive technologies. Coordinators focus on accommodations, communication and notetaking, and front desk operations.

In 2018-19, the DRC registered 1,521 students for accommodations, an increase of 139.9% from five years ago. For 2019-20, the number of students registered exceeded 2,000. To manage the growing demand for services, the DRC has responded in two ways: 1) systematized services, and 2) expanded staffing. To systematize services, the DRC undertook four tasks. First, the DRC implemented a technology solution to semi-automate the management of accommodations each semester for students already registered with DRC. Second, the DRC focused on direct services (e.g., accommodations, proctored testing, and assistive technology) while referring registered students to other campus resources for other services (e.g., Counseling & Psychological Services, Academic Success Center, academic advising). Third, each of the disability specialists focused on particular student groups based upon disability, population (e.g., Veterans or students at risk of homelessness), or academic major. Fourth, the DRC standardized a list of 296 accommodations to expedite the specialists in serving their students. Each of these four tasks helped improve the operational efficiency of the unit, so DRC could meet growing demand. DRC also expanded staffing by hiring temporary personnel. A permanent position has been approved to replace one temporary position, but the hiring freeze subsequent to the coronavirus emergency has halted the search to fill it.

UNLV has been working with students on racial and social equity issues for many years and the renewed attention in society should help these efforts and ensure more opportunities are available for students.

> Hate Uncycled was a 3-part series that discussed the history of hate, different forms of hate, and how hate is manifested in today's society, especially on college campuses.
>
> Each session had a specific topic for discussion and delved into how people experience hate based on their identity.

Part I: Overview of Institutional Assessment Plan

UNLV Top Tier Mission

As a public institution, the university's goal is to carry out its state-driven mission of education, research, and community impact. UNLV's Top Tier mission statement, vision, and strategic plan were made official when approved at the March 2016 NSHE Board of Regents meeting. President Meana wholeheartedly supported the Top Tier mission as the strategic plan for the university during her time as president.

> ### UNLV's Top Tier Mission
>
> UNLV's diverse faculty, students, staff, and alumni promote community well-being and individual achievement through education, research, scholarship, creative activities, and clinical services. We stimulate economic development and diversification, foster a climate of innovation, promote health, and enrich the cultural vitality of the communities that we serve.

There is widespread and frequent communication about the Top Tier mission and core themes. A link to the Top Tier mission and strategic plan is included at the bottom of all webpages in the university's template. Top Tier Focus is published every other month to provide an overview of progress by goal area. Open-campus fora are held annually for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members to learn about progress toward the Top Tier strategic planning goals and refinements of this living document.

UNLV attained Carnegie Very High Research Activity (R1) Status[12] in December 2018, achieving one of its Top Tier strategic plan goals ahead of schedule and the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement[13] in January 2020. These designations are indications of the university's commitment to its full Top Tier mission and strategic planning goals.

UNLV defines mission fulfillment through the level of achievement of its core theme objectives. The four core themes are derived from the mission statement, and are articulated in the Top Tier strategic plan. They are:

- Student Achievement
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
- Academic Health Center
- Community Partnerships

The Top Tier strategic plan has an additional goal of infrastructure and shared governance. This goal supports all of the core themes, and while it is considered essential for success, it is not itself a core theme. Each of the four core themes has objectives, indicators, and rationales

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[12] https://www.unlv.edu/news/release/unlv-attains-highest-status-research-university
[13] https://www.unlv.edu/news/release/unlv-achieves-national-community-engagement-distinction

describing why they are important, and a description of how the level of achievement of the indicators represents acceptable progress toward core theme and mission fulfillment.

The executive committee of the Top Tier Strategic Plan committee, consisting of the President, Executive Vice President and Provost, academic and administrative faculty, and support staff from across campus, gather performance data annually, as mapped by the core theme indicators. Data are input and stored in the software platform AchieveIt, which maintains a database indicating who is responsible for reporting on each core theme indicator or metric. The president's office staff requests for data are sent annually to the appropriate individuals. The leadership team compiles the findings into annual reports, which are shared with the campus, community, NSHE, and the state.

The objectives and metrics defined in each core theme demonstrate success towards becoming a Top Tier university. Progress toward those objectives, measured by their metrics, demonstrates mission fulfillment as defined by the institution. Annual goals have been set for each metric to allow the institution to monitor progress and act quickly if goals are not met. Meeting annual goals clearly demonstrates mission fulfillment. Should an annual goal not be met, additional efforts will be concentrated on that goal to evaluate the impediments to progress or understand what environment must occur to make the next goal achievable. The university has established rubrics to evaluate the level of attainment of the 48 individual goals and, wholly demonstrate mission fulfillment. For individual metrics and to determine the overall level of mission fulfillment for the university, the following rubric is used:

Excellent	90-100% of goal met
Good	80-89% of goal met
Fair	79-75% of goal met
Needs Improvement	74% or less of goal met

The AchieveIt software assists in the process by identifying underperforming metrics. To address performance, background information is gathered on any metrics that did not meet their goal. This information is presented to the executive committee of the Top Tier Strategic Plan committee where priorities for recommendations are developed for the most pressing issues. The priorities are discussed with the president and provost and then delegated to the appropriate individuals, generally vice presidents, vice provosts, etc., on campus. This process is completed by the beginning of the fall semester so that action plans can be developed and implemented for the next academic year.

An example of a metric that did not meet its goal is the Ackerman Autism Center client visits in Core Theme 3, part of the healthcare delivery and community service objective. While a path had been charted that anticipated continued growth, the actual client visits decreased and fell short of the annual goal projection in 2018-19 and 2019-20. When investigated, data revealed that in addition to some registered behavior technician vacancies throughout the time, a speech pathologist position was planned for the 2019-20 year; however, this position was vacant for approximately nine months, which resulted in reduced visit capacity. With the position filled and the continued development around Academic Health, this metric was not deemed a concern, especially as the other metrics for this objective all met or exceed their annual benchmark goal.

In 2018, the metric freshman retention rate, Core Theme 1, undergraduate retention objective, did show an increase but did not meet its goal again. This continues to be a concern for the executive committee. The history of performance for this metric was traced back 15 years, with that information showing that the performance had not made any significant change over time. Improving this metric was identified as a priority in fall 2018, and in order to promote a culture of ownership at all levels, specifically college/school and academic department level, a plan was developed in late fall 2018 and implemented during spring and fall semesters 2019. Data and graphs down to the department level were created and distributed to senior leadership, deans, and department chairs. The graphs were created as a way to help unit leadership visually see their specific unit data and to help them understand it in relation to the university as a whole. This was the first time data was broken down to this level and distributed. Another step involved further training leaders to utilize UNLV Analytics, the online data system with electronic dashboards for a variety of data points, including admission, enrollment, retention/persistence, graduation rates, and degrees.

These dashboards provide the ability to drill down to department and academic degree level. Unit leaders are now able to view their data in a multitude of ways, with numerous possibilities for dissecting the data in various manners. This approach, distributed for the first time during fall 2019, was used in order to ensure that leadership has access to data, can analyze the data, and use that data to make decisions and take action. Further efforts are envisioned to make data available and transparent for leaders and it is utilized to inform decisions. While efforts to continue to provide data for the spring 2020 semester were underway, these efforts had to be redirected in response to the developing budget crisis in the state due to COVID-19.

In spite of the issues in spring 2020, the preliminary graduation rate shows an increase of 4.4% which is 6.9% over the goal. The preliminary freshman retention rate shows an increase of 4.6%, which is just .2% short of the goal.

Student achievement is the foundation of the Top Tier vision and every member of the UNLV community is responsible for student success, and efforts must address all areas of the student experience. The colleges/schools have been charged with creating or revising strategic plans, aligned with the Top Tier Strategic Plan, that address each of the following student achievement areas:
- Curriculum
- Co-curricular Activities
- Instruction
- Student Support Services

Though some student success initiatives in each of these areas will be managed centrally, the executive committee of the Top Tier Strategic Plan committee believes it is important that each college/school develop faculty-driven initiatives that align with institutional initiatives, meet the unique needs of their students, and promote accountability at the college level. Efforts have been made to develop a robust plan focused on student achievement, including identification of bottleneck courses and development of a proposal to increase first-year advising and outreach, thus working to improve not only retention and graduation rates, but student success overall.

As the university continues to work to improve retention and graduation rates, numerous programs have been developed. One is highlighted below.

Over the last several years, UNLV has implemented several initiatives designed to increase the retention, success, and engagement of our diverse first-year students. These programs began in 2017 in response to increasing enrollment of underserved student populations. The programs included curricular structures in developmental math, proactive outreach and communication, and referral to campus tutoring and coaching resources. We are pleased to share that the retention of our underserved student populations has increased from 66% to 77% over the last few years and have now implemented an enhanced our first-year success program that is comprehensive and serves large numbers of students.

The Student Outreach Specialists (SOS) team delivers proactive outreach and communication to a cohort of freshmen throughout their entire first year. The purpose of the program is to provide first-year students with timely information about campus resources and share upcoming deadlines or action items that promote student progression and engagement. Students identified to receive SOS outreach are underserved students with three or more precollege characteristics that are associated with lower retention rates, i.e. first generation status, Pell eligible, and lower high school GPA and/or standardized test scores.

Student Outreach Specialists are students themselves and contact their assigned caseload of students by phone and email several times throughout the new student's first year. The primary purpose of the outreach is to help new students establish a sense of connection with a caring campus professional while learning when and where to seek support for hurdles that could become barriers to progression.

Since implementing the SOS team 2017 through summer of 2020, there have been consistent first and second year retention gains. Please see cohort based retention rates for the SOS cohort of approximately 1,500 underserved first-year students at UNLV.

Table X: Retention Rates for Underserved Student Cohorts

Cohort Year	1-Year Retention	2-Year Retention
Fall 2016 (no intervention)	66.8%	54.6%
Fall 2017	68.9%	59.7%
Fall 2018	74.4%	64.6%
Fall 2019	77.2%	TBD

As a result of the successful outcomes of the SOS team, over the last year support for first-year students at UNLV has been expanded and scaled up. The comprehensive first-year success program provides all incoming students with a dedicated First-Year Advisor in their academic college, structured peer mentoring in first year seminars, and proactive outreach throughout the academic year from both advising centers and the SOS team. The university looks forward to sharing the retention, progression, and completion data from this enhanced model of student success in fall 2021.

In addition to being a designated Title III and V Minority Serving Institution, a HSI, and AANAPISI institution, about 33 percent of the university's undergraduates and 41 percent[14] of new first-year students receive federal financial aid through Pell Grant. Almost 30 percent of students are considered first-generation[15]. The Academic Success Center (ASC) exists to serve students who are exploring majors, Major Pathways'[16] students, student athletes, provide academic success coaching, tutoring, and supplemental instruction[17], bridge programs, dual enrollment with high schools, and first and second year College of Liberal Arts (COLA) courses to help students explore majors and careers. The COLA 100E program strives to hire and retain a diverse (ethnic, gender, disciplinary background) team of instructors, as it is understood how meaningful it is for students to see faculty who look like them or have had similar experiences (e.g., being a first-generation college student).

In 2016, the colleges of Engineering, Sciences, and Business were concerned about the first-year students whose math scores on the standardized tests (ACT or SAT) were lower than the minimum necessary for the first entry math course required for the majors in those colleges. The students who started at a math course below the required first math course would add, at the minimum, an extra semester of math or possibly an extra year, depending on the number of developmental math courses that were needed. Retention for this group of students was low as many of the students were not passing the pre-requisite math courses. The Exploring-Major Pathways program was developed. Admitted students received academic advising and support services from the Academic Success Center (ASC). As students progressed through their pre-requisite math courses, the academic advisors spent time counseling them on their career aspirations, looking at alternative majors as the students made progression or not, through their math curriculum.

> In early July 2020, the UNLV Cares Food Pantry was awarded a $250,000 CARES Act grant. The funding will enable the pantry to purchase food, equipment, a new online ordering system, and to offer nutrition education to the community. The Pantry is managed by the School of Integrated Health Sciences.

In 2016, the original first-time, full-time cohort for the ASC had 337 Exploring-Major Pathways students: Business Pathways (n=130), Engineering Pathways (n=90), and Science Pathways (n=117). Of this group 29.7% (100/337) students were first-generation and 45.1% (152/337) were Pell Eligible. With the exception of Native American, all the IPEDs Ethnicities were included, with the three highest being 36.8% (124/337) Hispanic, 24.6% (83/337) Caucasian, and 13.4% (45/337) African American.

Overall retention for this group from fall 2016 to spring 2017 was 81.9% (276/337). From fall

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[14] As of fall 2019
[15] As of fall 2019
[16] https://www.unlv.edu/asc/advising/major
[17] https://www.unlv.edu/asc/si

2016 to fall 2017, retention was 63.2% (213/337). After two years, retention from fall 2016 to spring 2018 was 54.0% (182/337).

After reviewing the disappointing results from this initial group of Pathways students, initiatives have been put into place to increase the retention rate of the students. More targeted outreach, communication, and touch points have been added throughout the semesters. More coordinated efforts have occurred among the ASC units to reach the students, such as the Pathways students are now enrolled in the ASC's COLA 100E course, as opposed to their desired college's first-year seminar. Drop-in advising has allowed students easier access to the academic advisors, and recently Peer Mentors have been added to reach out to students. Within the last two years, a dramatic increase in the number of first-time, full-time cohort Exploring-Major Pathway students has increased: in 2016 there were 337 students, in 2017 there were 451 students, and in 2018 there were 637 students. A dramatic increase has occurred in retention of the Pathways students, particularly into later semesters. Fall-to-spring retention has increased from 81.9% (276/334) in the 2016 cohort, to 86.7% (391/451) in the 2017 cohort, to 88.5% (564/637) in the 2018 cohort.

Fall-to-fall retention has been even better. In the 2016 cohort, there was a 63.2% (213/337) fall-to-fall retention, in the 2017 cohort a 70.1% (316/451) fall-to-fall retention, and in the 2018 cohort a 76.3% (486/637) fall-to-fall retention occurred. The fourth semester retention has been showing promise too as students in the 2016 cohort were retained at 54.0% (182/337) and students in the 2017 cohort were retained at 62.5% (282/451). As of this writing we are in the middle of the 2018 cohorts' fourth semester and retention is at 70.8% (451/637) as of a February 24, 2020 (the most recent numbers available) enrollment check.

NCAA Academic Eligibility Specialists help recruit and work directly with the UNLV student-athlete population to support them through their educational process. Eligibility Specialists meet individually with the student-athletes to keep each student academically eligible with effectively balanced and personalized course scheduling to accommodate the extra demands of practices, play, and travel of the students while their sport is in season. Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) Eligibility Specialists also assist students with choosing majors, setting academic goals, and arranging for necessary academic support for successful course completion. The SAAS team helps student-athletes negotiate career planning, life skills, and eventual alumni involvement. SAAS works closely with UNLV Athletics and Career Services to match athletes in careers upon graduation and to provide the "Whole Rebel Academy" for students to have a holistic experience while at UNLV.

The SAAS team presents "NCAA 101" programs to the Las Vegas Community, educating prospective student-athletes on required academic rules to be able to compete in NCAA athletics. The program also helps prepare high school student-athletes for the transition into college, e.g., going to school full-time while training/competing.

The Eligibility Specialists have a prescribed approach to working with student-athletes, particularly in their first semester, to assist in their success. Students have access to SAAS Eligibility Specialists at any time. This contributes to the 65% graduation rate of student-athletes, which is almost 20% higher than UNLV's general population of undergraduate students.

All teams at UNLV maintained a multi-year Academic Progress Rate (APR) score of 952 or better, remaining penalty-free and eligible for post-season competition. One team (Women's Volleyball) scored a perfect 1,000 multi-year score. Four teams (Men's Golf, Men's Swimming & Diving, Women's Tennis, and Women's Volleyball) scored a perfect 1,000 single-year score.

Additional details of this Academic Success Center program and increased success rates of students are available in appendix 5.

Following the NWCCU 2017 Year Seven Evaluation, the campus worked to thoroughly integrate the Top Tier Strategic Plan and the core themes in accreditation. Each core theme objective has clearly defined metrics that assess the university's growth towards each objective and the university has established baselines and goals for each metric, and for each year in the seven year cycle. Each year's review sheds light on successes and areas for improvement, which are prioritized, documented, and shared with the campus community.

UNLV's attainment of its metrics has been steadily increasing. July 2018 data revealed a 76% "goal met" or attainment rate, and July 2019 data revealed a 77% attainment rate. In March of 2020, UNLV remained on track at 80% attainment; however, the attainment rate for July 2020 dropped to 68%. Some metrics did not meet goals and require further review; however, there were other metrics that were anticipated to be met but were negatively impacted by COVID-19 and may account for the lower attainment rate for 2020. For the Academic Health Center goals, patient and client visits were adversely impacted with clinics and practices forced to shut down until they could begin utilizing tele-health services, and when visits resumed, both via tele-health and in-person, patients and clients were cautious with resuming appointments due to concerns over the changed format or concerns for their safety in public. Campus activity stopped with the move of all classes to remote instruction and all buildings being closed. This caused visitors to stop coming to campus, and the abrupt shift to remote instruction may have contributed to the decrease in student perception of written communication and critical thinking attainment in their major courses.

The Top Tier plan is an overarching plan for the university to move itself forward. It is comprised of many different areas and touches the entire university. It is the first time the university has defined so many specific areas in which it would like to improve, set goals, and continuously assess itself on an annual basis. It is a widely-known and supported plan throughout the faculty and staff. In April 2020, President Meana issued an update regarding how to continue to advance the university in the difficult times being experienced in 2020, appendix 6.

The Top Tier plan is not the university's only method of assessing itself. Academic programs are assessed continuously through the Assessment Annual Reports completed for the Office of Academic Assessment; discipline accreditations; and program reviews. The Division of Student Affairs assesses itself through student surveys, both locally created and national surveys that allow comparison among peer institutions. Many administrative units solicit feedback on a regular basis in order to improve their service to the campus community.

Part II: Representative Examples of Operationalization of Mission

In the fall semester of 2019, UNLV launched an award and grant program to incentivize faculty and staff to become more involved in the accreditation efforts. The program is modeled after the annual academic assessment awards which produces excellent best practices in academic program-level assessment being implemented at the university. Several of those awardees have presented with the assessment staff at national conferences. The following two programs were awarded $1,500 grants with the option of reapplying in future years.

1. ***Classroom BITEs: Building Inclusivity Through Empathy***
   Melissa Bowles-Terry and Rebecca Gill

The *Classroom BITEs: Building Inclusivity Through Empathy* project is based on and adapted from the *Dialogues* activities from the West Virginia University ADVANCE Center. In 2018, three UNLV faculty members were recruited to attend a workshop at West Virginia University and were trained to be facilitators for *Department Dialogues*. In spring 2019, a workshop was held with UNLV faculty to train them how to facilitate healthier discussions in their departments. It was difficult to convince faculty members why this was important and why they were the right people to try to improve the climate in their department. Assessment of the *Department Dialogues* at other institutions has undergone significant evaluation and has been shown to improve outcomes in departments related to faculty perceptions of their department climates. The UNLV members of the *Dialogues* team understood this perspective and brainstormed about other ways the strategies they learned could be used. A new plan was created with the intent of helping faculty members connect with their students in the classroom, and helping students connect with each other through better understanding of how students interpret and think about issues differently based on their previous experiences.

Based on the research, the goals of the *Classroom BITEs* process are to 1) *unfreeze* the status quo in an individual classroom through structured conversations, which will move the participants toward enhanced communication and empathetic connections, 2) *change* towards a more inclusive understanding and, 3) *refreeze* the improved dynamics and embed more inclusive, equitable communication structures. This process is intended to gently move faculty away from their attachment to the status quo before attempting change. The program promotes interdependence and collective efficacy, reshaping the classroom climate promoting equity and diversity through cooperative engagement, increased inclusivity, team-building, productivity, and effectiveness. Each classroom activity focuses on one or more of these stages: 1) build trust and empathy 2) enhance communication, 3) facilitate structured conversations and, 4) engage in inclusive decision-making. Several workshops and a presentation were done in 2019 for faculty and in spring 2020 a mini-workshop was conducted at the UNLV's Faculty Center.

The assessment plan for the program involves gathering assessment data from two key constituencies: faculty who have been trained in the *Classroom BITEs* techniques and students in the classes of instructors who have implemented the techniques. The assessment instrument for faculty is adapted from the West Virginia University *Dialogues* assessment plan. The assessment includes items intended to measure constructs associated with change in the collective properties of small decision-making groups. The student assessments will be collected through a

WebCampus module which will allow the students to reflect on their experiences and engage in discussion with other students.

Although UNLV has ranked in the top ten most diverse undergraduate campuses for over eight years, there is still work to be accomplished in making classrooms increasingly friendly and comfortable for all students and this program aims to create classroom culture that is inclusive and equitable and to improve retention and student success. This program supports Core Theme 1, Student Achievement, and should contribute to both the retention and the completion of students. During the fall 2020 semester, the workshops will be redesigned for online/remote presentation, with delivery beginning in spring 2021. The goal is to train 100 additional faculty members in 2021 utilizing the funding provided from the new award and grant program.

2. ***Assessing Student Retention and Success in the Developmental Gateway English Composition Course***
   Kaitlin Clinnin

The English Composition courses are required courses in the Undergraduate General Education curriculum; all students must complete six credits in English Composition. Most students enroll in ENG 101 and ENG 102 to satisfy the Composition requirement. However, based on their standardized test scores, about 1,000 students are placed into the developmental English gateway sequence ENG 101E and 101F (known at UNLV as the stretch program) upon admission. The ENG 101E/F course sequence "stretches" the ENG 101 curriculum over two semesters so that students in the stretch program complete the same, college-level curriculum as the one-semester ENG 101 course but over two semesters so that students have more time, practice, and support to develop their critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

> Through the UNLV Military and Veteran Services Center, the university serves more than 1,850 active-duty, reserve, or veteran military students on campus.
> UNLV is recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as a VetSuccess campus and designated a military-friendly school by G.I. Jobs Magazine.

Developmental writing at UNLV is currently in transition due to the Nevada System of Higher Education level initiatives. In an effort to increase student retention and graduation rates, NSHE has partnered with Complete College America (CCA), which advocates for institutions to eradicate "remedial" or below college-level courses. CCA argues that remedial education negatively impacts student retention and completion because remedial courses disproportionately enroll underserved student populations and students enrolled in remedial coursework are less likely to enroll in subsequent courses, which increases the college achievement gap for underserved student populations. Additionally, students who begin in remedial courses face a longer time to degree as they must complete below college-level coursework before enrolling in the general education or major-specific required courses. CCA advocates co-requisite courses, an alternative curricular model that enrolls students immediately in college-level courses and provides additional "just in time" academic support through labs, studios, or tutorials. NSHE has since passed a co-requisite policy that eliminates all remedial math and English courses and mandates co-requisite education implementation at all institutions by fall 2021.

At UNLV, the developmental writing/stretch program has already begun to respond to the system-level policy by assessing the program's impact on student retention and success, especially for underserved student populations. In spring 2019, with the help of the Office of Decision Support, an internal program assessment was conducted and found that although students from historically underrepresented populations are more likely to be placed in the stretch sequence, enrollment in the stretch program is decreasing overall (including for students of all ethnicities), and that students of all ethnicities are less likely to earn a Fail, Withdrawal, or Incomplete in the stretch program sequence than in the one-semester ENG 101 course. When compared to the limited co-requisite English data from other state systems, the stretch program meets or exceeds student success in co-requisite courses. Based on the assessment report, NSHE is allowing the English stretch program to continue as they have determined the sequence is college-level instruction and it is as successful as the co-requisite model.

In spite of the stretch program's successes, there are two major student retention and success concerns in the stretch program that warrant additional assessment and intervention.

Concern 1: Student Retention in the Stretch Program A significant percentage of students do not enroll in the second course (ENG 101F) needed to complete the stretch program sequence and the gateway English course. This percentage has fluctuated between 13-19% from 2010 to 2018. However, due to data collection limitations, this percentage may not be completely accurate. The percentage of "Did Not Enroll (DNE) in 101F" students may also be higher than expected due to data collection limitations; the Office of Decision Support was only able to track students who complete the stretch program sequence in the same academic year (summer, fall, and spring semesters). This means students who began the stretch sequence in the spring semester and completed the sequence the following summer or fall would be part of the DNE percentage.

In this project, students enrolled in ENG 101E will be tracked and their progress to completing the stretch sequence followed. This tracking will provide an accurate percentage of students who do not enroll in 101F, and by identifying the students who truly do not enroll in ENG 101F, possible challenges that are preventing students from completing their gateway English course can be identified.

Concern 2: Student Success in the Stretch Program Although students are less likely to earn a Drop, Fail, or Withdrawal (D/F/W) in the stretch sequence than in the one-semester course, the D/F/W percentage is higher for "off-cycle" stretch courses offered in the spring and summer than the fall offerings. More assessment is needed to determine why the D/F/W rate is higher for spring and summer students than the fall so that appropriate interventions (scheduling, curricular, pedagogical, etc.) can be developed and implemented.

This project addresses an important *Core Theme 1, Student Achievement* problem at UNLV: What interventions can help students who place into the developmental writing sequence successfully complete their gateway English course? The findings from this assessment project will impact the 1,000 students who place into the stretch sequence as their gateway English course. Assessing the stretch program and identifying interventions to improve student retention and performance in the program can positively impact the larger institutional goals of increasing student retention and improving student success, especially for underserved student populations.

Ultimately the findings from this assessment project will help the Composition Program ensure that students who require additional reading and writing instruction have the necessary curricular, pedagogical, and campus support so that they can successfully complete their gateway English course within their first year and may continue to make timely progress towards their degree.

The potential findings from this assessment project can also inform student retention and success efforts across campus. A more accurate understanding of the students who are placed into developmental writing courses and their challenges to complete the stretch sequence can result in more targeted, collaborative efforts across campus. Currently the Composition Program already participates in the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education's Early Alert system to help advisors identify students at-risk of failing or low performance. However, with better knowledge about the specific challenges facing stretch program students (ex: factors that may prevent them from enrolling in the second course or hinder their success in the courses), the Composition Program and the university more broadly may be able to offer targeted support (financial, social, pedagogical) or make changes (policy, curricular, scheduling) that lessen these challenges and better facilitate student retention and success.

To investigate the aforementioned student retention and success concerns in the stretch program, a multi-phase assessment project will begin fall 2020 and extend to spring 2023. This project will be undertaken by an investigative team from the Composition Program led by Director of Composition and Assistant Professor of English and other Composition Program administrators including two Assistant Professors-in-Residence, one administrative faculty member, and multiple graduate research assistants. Phase One begins with data collection and analysis. Phase One findings will inform the Phase Two development of pilot interventions, which are scaled to programmatic adoption in Phase Three.

Phase 1 (Fall 2020-Summer 2021): Initial Data Collection
As discussed in the previous sections, one challenge is the lack of accurate, representative information about the students enrolled in the stretch program. Specifically, to identify and develop appropriate interventions to the stretch program requires that program administrators have 1) a more detailed understanding of the students who are placed in the stretch program (including demographic information and college success indicators like test scores, high school GPA, etc.) and 2) better data about the number of students who DNE in the second stretch writing course (ENG 101F), characteristics of these students, and the outcomes of DNE students. The investigative team will work with the Office of Decision Support to identify cohorts of students in ENG 101 and ENG 101E/F, to gather relevant demographic information and student success indicators, and to track the performance of students as they complete their gateway English course. The team will work with the College of Education's Center for Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (CREA) to analyze student performance data and identify any actionable patterns for Phase 2.

Phase 2 (Fall 2021-Summer 2022): Pilot Intervention Implementation
The investigative team will continue the data collection from Phase 1 with new student cohorts. The data analysis from Phase 1 will also inform new pilot interventions. One data-driven pilot intervention may be the development of a co-requisite writing course because the findings from

the spring 2019 stretch program assessment demonstrate that students who begin the sequence "off-cycle" (in the spring or summer semesters) are more likely to earn a D/F/W. The investigative team will develop a co-requisite developmental writing course, a one-semester 5 or 6 credit-hour writing course that provides additional support for students. We will pilot the pilot co-requisite course in spring 2022 while also maintaining the stretch course, and we will comparatively assess student performance to across the two course models.

Phase 3 (Fall 2022-Spring 2023): Scaling Interventions
In addition to continuing data collection as in the previous phases, Phase 3 will focus on scaling up the findings and pilot interventions to the entire writing program. Grant renewal, if awarded, will pay course instructors (most of whom are part-time instructors) to attend a professional development workshop to learn about the multi-year assessment findings, to assist in programmatic and campus-wide interventions that emerged from these findings, and to develop best pedagogical practices to support student writers.

Part III. Action Required for Year Seven

UNLV will continue the annual update of its Top Tier plan metrics, assessing the results, determining appropriate actions, and engaging the campus community. The effects of the pandemic may first be seen in the spring 2020 metrics of the retention and graduation data for which preliminary figures were provided, with the expectation that final figures will be early fall 2020 and provided to the Mid-Cycle evaluators prior to the evaluation. How these numbers and others will change over the next few semesters due to COVID-19 is unknown. Every aspect of the university has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and progress on the Top Tier initiatives will show that impact. The university intends to continue to monitor its progress towards mission fulfillment and devise new ways to assist students in graduating.

The Top Tier Strategic Plan will be reviewed with UNLV's new president, Dr. Keith Whitfield, sometime after his start date, depending on his priorities. The ongoing situation with COVID-19 will continue to affect the university through fall 2020 and possibly spring 2021, with many courses being offered remotely.

The two representative examples of the operationalization of the mission, Classroom BITEs: Building Inclusivity Through Empathy and Assessing Student Retention and Success in the Developmental Gateway English Composition Course are expected to provide "boots on the ground" evidence of campus efforts to sustain momentum for mission fulfillment at all levels. These and other initiatives, in conjunction with our institutional metrics, demonstrate progress and help to identify opportunities for improvement. Close monitoring and strategic support for these types of initiatives will be critical as we work together as a campus community to recover from the effects of the pandemic and continue to serve our students.

UNLV

UNLV Glossary

AANAPISI	Asian-American and Native-American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution
ACGME	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
Administrative Faculty	Salaried employees also called Professional Staff; generally non- teaching employees
AIM	DRC technology solution
APIME	Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and International students
APR	Academic Progress Rate
ASC	Academic Success Center
BOR	Board of Regents, the governing body of the Nevada System of Higher Education
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of March 2020
CCA	Complete College America
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
Cisco Webex	Online video conferencing system
COLA	College of Liberal Arts
COLA 100E	A first-year seminar course (part of the general education program) to assist students in their transition to university life
CREA	Center for Research, Evaluation, and Assessment
CSN	College of Southern Nevada
D/F/W	Drop, fail or withdrawal
DNE	Did not enroll
DRC	Disability Resource Center
EVP & P	Executive Vice President and Provost
FY	Fiscal Year
HSI	Hispanic Serving Institution
IGS	Integrated Graphic Services
IMT	Incident Management Team
MSI	Minority Serving Institution
NACCC	National Assessment of College Campus Climate
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NSHE	Nevada System of Higher Education
OIT	Office of Information Technology
PAC	President's Advisory Council
Professional Staff	Salaried employees also called Administrative Faculty
PTI	Part-time Instructor
QTPOC	Queer Trans People of Color
RPC	Retention, Progression and Completion
SAAS	Student-Athlete Academic Services
SDSJ	Student Diversity and Social Justice

SI	Supplemental Instruction
SOS	Student Outreach Specialists
SPA	Student Affairs Strategic Planning and Assessment
SRWC	Student Recreation and Wellness Center
SSS	Student Support Services
Top Tier	UNLV's strategic plan
UNLV	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
UULO	University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes
VPUE	Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
WebCampus	UNLV's course management (Canvas)