UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS - ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

Hixson-Lied Success Scholar Newsletter

Finish Fast: Fifteen for a Degree

By: Robert Vargas, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

UNLV has launched a new initiative to promote finishing your degree on time, called “15 to Finish.” In order to finish your degree in a four-year time span, it is recommended to take 15 credits each semester or 30 credits a year. A bachelor’s degree requires a minimum of 120 credits and by taking 30 credits for four years; you’ll reach that magic number of 120 credits for graduation.

Fifteen credits per semester are recommended because it increases your chances of graduating. A study of UNLV graduation rates showed that only 20.5% of students graduated by taking fewer than 12 credits each semester. That increased to 41.0% when students took 12-14 credits a semester. Students who took 15 or more credits achieved a 53.1% graduation rate (UNLV website, 2014). By taking over 15 credits a semester, your chances of graduating double compared to taking less than 12 credits a semester! It is important to graduate because you will be able to earn $18,000 more every year compared to someone with only a high school diploma (UNLV website, 2014). In addition, by finishing your degree on time, you will be able to move on to the next step of your future. You can start applying for jobs, volunteer, travel, or even start on an advanced degree. By taking 15 credits every semester, you will allow your-

Ms. Christina M. Hixson graduated from high school in Clarinda, Iowa and moved to Omaha, Nebraska to attend business school. She later went to work for Mr. Ernst F. Lied, a car dealership owner in Omaha and in 1960 she joined Mr. Lied in Las Vegas, Nevada as his assistant. After Mr. Lied’s death in 1980, Ms. Hixson became the sole trustee of the Lied Foundation Trust and turned the Lied Foundation Trust into one of the largest foundations in the state of Nevada at that time. Ms. Hixson has a special understanding of young people who, like her, came from a challenging family background and are willing to work hard.

Mr. Ernst F. Lied was born in Columbus, Ohio and attended the University of Kansas for two years, where he played on the golf team. He ultimately graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1927. Mr. Lied became a Buick dealer in Omaha, Nebraska and later his dealership was ranked third in the country for the number of cars sold. Mr. Lied established his charitable foundation in 1972, and upon his death in 1980 at age 74 nearly his entire estate funded the Lied Foundation Trust. Lied Foundation Trust has enhanced the capabilities of many schools and enriched the quality of many lives!

Continued on pg. 2
Finish Fast: Fifteen for a Degree Continued

self to get a head start on your future plans and use your education to the fullest.

As a student, you have a great amount of resources to help you make decisions. Meeting with your academic advisor is a great way to get started. Advisors know exactly what it takes to obtain your degree and by meeting with them once a semester, you can plan your schedule and ensure that you are taking the right classes. Creating a four-year plan for graduation with your advisor can also help keep you on track. If you can’t take 15 credits each semester, you can catch up by taking classes during Summer Term. The advisement report on MyUNLV is a great resource to help you select your classes and check your degree progress. With a little increase to your credits, a few meetings with an advisor, and of course studying hard, you can be successful in achieving your degree. For more information, visit http://www.unlv.edu/15

Summer Fun
By: Agbor Enokenwa, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Hopefully, this summer will be memorable for everyone, especially here in Las Vegas where there are a lot of great places to go and activities to do.

An interesting event coming up in Las Vegas this summer is the J. Cole concert on Memorial Day. This concert should be great for younger audiences. Other great spots to enjoy your summer in Las Vegas are the water parks Wet ‘n’ Wild and Cowabunga Bay. Wet ‘n’ Wild was brought back and remade due to local demand and is a great place to cool off. If you would like to catch some waves during the summer, I recommend taking a trip to Florida or one of the islands of Hawaii.

For people who love to travel around the world for some adventure, I highly recommend going to Brazil this summer for the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Four years ago, I attended the South African World Cup with my family and it was the greatest experience I ever had. Some places like Jamaica and the beautiful beaches of the Caribbean would be great for students who are trying to release the stress from the spring semester. Personally, I will be spending my summer here in Las Vegas with my family. I am excited because I have family from France coming to visit and it will be great for me to give them a tour of the place I have lived in for five years. If you are also staying in town, this summer is a great opportunity to continue advancing toward your college degree by taking UNLV summer courses (visit http://summerterm.unlv.edu/). Have a safe and fun summer!

What You Didn’t Know About Michael Terry
By: Brittany Prescott, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Michael Terry is a new advisor at the ASC, so we decided to give the UNLV faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to get to know him a little better. Michael is originally from Utah, but grew up traveling a lot due to having a father in the US Air Force. One incident Michael remembers from his childhood is being evacuated from his home in the Philippines, where his father was stationed, due to a volcanic eruption.

Michael loves hiking, reading, and playing with his one year old daughter, Nora. After getting his Bachelor’s degree in English at the University of Central Arkansas, he
What You Didn’t Know About Michael Terry Continued

went on to receive a Masters in American Studies at Utah State University and a Masters in Public Administration at the University of Wyoming. When he was teaching English at Utah State, he discovered that his favorite part of teaching was meeting with students one-on-one. Although he thought of becoming a professor, Michael decided that advising felt more natural to him than teaching.

One of the pros of advising to him is when a student realizes something about themselves during their meeting that they had been unaware of previously. Helping them understand their strengths and weaknesses not only helps the student overcome difficulties, but also gives Michael extreme satisfaction in his job. These “ah-ha” moments make everything worth it. One of the most important tips Michael gives to his students is that they should get to know their professors. He advises that they should talk to them outside of class and let them know that they really care about the class and the subject. These professors can give students recommendations in the future for reference letters and grad school, and even help with grades. Students should also use the resources UNLV has to offer, such as tutoring, the library, the writing center, counseling, the gym, health center, and student organizations. Many of these aspects are included in tuition, so being aware of their benefits is very important. One of the most common struggles he’s seen with students is time management. Juggling work, school, activities, and family is a lot for a student to manage, including the financial responsibility of raised tuition costs.

Michael’s long term goal is to work up to an administrative role in advising where he can have a say in decision making and helping students. So far, Michael has had a really positive experience at UNLV, and has met many wonderful, friendly, and supportive colleagues. The students seem committed to their goals and success. He says he is happy to be at UNLV and experience all the new things Las Vegas has to offer.

Expect Success: Math Bridge Program

By: Maria Navarro, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

UNLV's Math Bridge Program is an on-campus program designed to help UNLV freshmen who have placed into college preparatory math to test into 100-level math courses. The program is designed to help students with core math concepts by combining online learning with live in-class assistance. The course meets in computer labs for the duration of the program, but students can also access the online platform at home.

Experienced tutors give math lessons and aid students as they work through the online tutorial. Students are given individualized attention and are also able to work in small groups. The program also helps students with note taking, study skills, and test anxiety. The Bridge Program allows students to gain confidence and feel empowered about their ability to learn.

The Math Bridge Program has greatly benefited UNLV students. According to the ASC Website (2014), 82.3% of students in the program placed into a 100-level math course last summer. By placing into a 100-level math course, students are able to save time (and money) in their path toward graduation.
Expect Success: Math Bridge Program Continued

This summer, the program is available during the second and third sessions. The program meets five days a week for three hours for the duration of one summer session. Students can choose to attend morning or afternoon sessions depending on space availability. The program is no extra cost to students, but students who do not complete the program will be charged $220. Students are also responsible for covering the cost of the placement exam at the end of the program. For more information and to register for the program please visit www.unlv.edu/asc/bridge.

Coaching Corner

By: Garrett Wilson, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

ASC Coach Maryann “Mo” Orawczyk is headed off to Chicago this summer. She recently accepted an amazing opportunity as a General Academic Advisor for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Mo is geared up and ready to depart in just two weeks. I had time to catch up with her to hear some of her recollections and parting words about her time at UNLV.

G: What’s your most memorable ASC moment?
M: I really enjoyed the interactions with staff and students. The moments I carry with me are the relationships I built.

G: What will you take away from your experience at the ASC?
M: The ASC has been a huge learning experience. I learned to change my communication style to accommodate all types of different students. There were a lot of lessons about working with students of varying personalities.

G: What encapsulates the UNLV experience for you?
M: The UNLV experience is completely what you make of it. As an undergrad, I lived on campus all four years. That’s how I became involved. As a first generation college student, I just loved being on any college campus in general. As an incoming student, you have to make the effort to have the university become a part of you. UNLV has been home to me for the past nine years. I’ve had mentors, and I’ve also made best friends.

G: What will you miss most about Las Vegas?
M: Besides the people on campus, I’ll miss the weather. Even the heat! I’ll miss that small town, big city feel. It’s very unique to the Las Vegas experience. Six degrees of separation is a real thing.

G: What will some of your duties be in your new position as a General Advisor?
M: I’ll be meeting with students and helping with course schedules. I’ll be doing a lot of the things I did as a Coach with additional responsibilities.

G: What are you looking forward to most in Chicago?
M: Starting my career. Chicago has been one of my favorite cities. I’ve fallen in love with it. I’m not looking forward to winter though!

G: What kind of Las Vegas flair will you take with you to Chicago?
M: When people complain about the heat, I’ll be one of those people who tell them that it’s nothing compared to the Mojave.

G: How do you think culture will differ campus and city-wise?
M: There’s a difference between an urban campus like Chicago and one like UNLV. The culture of Las Vegas breeds different students. Chicago’s neighborhoods are a little more silo-like, I think. Las Vegas is a huge melting pot. It’s so unique; you don’t find something like this other than in Las Vegas.

G: Final Question… Are you going to miss In-N-Out?
M: Yes! There’s nothing in Chicago that can replace it. [Not even White Castle.]

*All photos used are original or can be found at unlv.edu unless otherwise noted.*