Top Tier Weekly Summary Report - New

Top Tier Feedback - FY17

November 13th 2017, 7:00 am PST

Q4 - Email Address

Email Address

[REDACTED]
Q5 - My feedback is specific to:

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Other

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Q7 - If you are an alumnus or alumna, please indicate the year(s) you graduated and the degree(s) you received:

[REDACTED]
Q8 - What do you like about the action plan/Top Tier plan?

What do you like about the action plan/Top Tier plan?

I like that there is a 6 year graduation goal.

Https and Facebook

I like the positive mission of the plan.

I have mentioned in a previous submission that I like that this plan is require the University to re-evaluate various aspects of how it functions. You cannot move forward without a clear understanding of where you are and what’s keeping you there.

I like that in order to reach the Top Tier goals, each and every aspect of the University is being re-evaluated. I hope this level of innovation and change continue to take place across the board. Some of the key re-evaluations to highlight - promotion and tenure standards; curriculum; extending class availability; reassignment of office / classroom / lab spaces.

I like that the university is attempting to garner a greater status amongst other universities.

I like the funding of low income students gives them a chance to go to college to pursue their academic goals.

The advances in education towards progress and integrating students into the real world.

Soundsgreat..

The Top Tier plan is very good.

Most importantly, having a plan is key. Next most important would be to make it inclusive and reflective of society in general while promoting innovation and leadership in particular.

That it establishes a standard to achieve and maintain.

A great idea.

I like the ambition to make UNLV a highly respected research university.

Las Vegas is one of the most sought after cities in the world for not only tourists but for business professionals alike. And not just successful business professionals, but those specifically who strive for abundant excellence and unwavering success. UNLV undergraduate and graduate programs should be held to and considered as top tier programs because of the top tier professionals that are bred and that strive within this city.

the emphasis on research-- moving away from the model of the teaching college.
Q9 - What don’t you like?

What don’t you like?

Https and Facebook

I feel as if the plan focuses on the positive without considering reality sometimes.

There isn't anything I don't like about this change. I understand that it will take time, and many people are complaining. But I truly believe that we as a University will be better for it.

Too much -- should be smaller more attainable goals

Nothing- I like the ambition.

I would like to rise the question on Extra-Contractual/Supplementary Compensation (ECC). Among the top tier institutions, many of them can pay the 9-contract faculty more than 3 months summer salary from the research grants, for example, GeorgiaTech can pay up to 9 months during the 3 summer months using research grants. UNR can pay up to 5 months during the 3 summer months using the research grants. I heard that UNLV has ECC program to allow additional payment for the faculty. Could you please implement it ASAP.

While top tier medical research can be a community enhancing vision, expressly mentioning it in a top tier mission statement prioritizes UT above more industry and technology initiatives. Overall this diminishes the universal appear of UNLVS top tier objectives.

No feedback form on 2016 Debate website so: It is a shame that Central Desert Complex was neglected with all the "campus sprucing" done for the debate. Even though the trailers are temporary, occupancy has been ongoing for 10+ years and the area could use some TLC, especially since an essential department is housed in the trailer park. At least a spruce to the large litterbox would have been nice. Let's hope the media outlets do not film that area.

It is not being conveyed well. Their are many staff members who don’t have a clue as to what top tier means and how it applies to what they do. You have to do more if this vision is to be manifested, you can't just post it to on the web and expect change to come.

I haven't reviewed the action plan, please send me a link to this info page.

I don't hear about any plans to improve the quality and stature of the faculty in the two main colleges, Liberal Arts and Sciences. A medical school is fine, but there are lots of schools on the new Wall Street Journal list of top 500 colleges in the US that don’t have a medical school. UNLV failed to make the list, and the lack of Medical School didn't factor in. No one who evaluates universities (outside southern Nevada) cares whether we have a football stadium on campus. But they care about student-faculty ratios and about the low rating for selectivity.

the emphasis on grant funding
Q10 - What are the issues that you believe will affect UNLV with these action plans or from reaching the Top Tier Vision, Mission, and Goals?

What are the issues that you believe will affect UNLV with these action plans or from reaching the Top Tier Vision, Mission, and Goals?

I'm very concerned about the celebratory nature of "Undocu-Week" activities. I'm one hundred per cent in favor of helping our undocumented students get the papers they need to stay in this country, and ultimately help them on the path to U.S. citizenship if that is their goal. But I strongly disagree with the seeming approval of breaking the laws of this country by the organizers of these events. The reality is that it is illegal for these students to be here. So let's get them the help they need, but let's not be "in your face" about the fact that they are breaking the law and it's perfectly fine with the administration at UNLV.

For students with disabilities, especially on the Autism Spectrum, there are issues with the 15 to finish push that is currently seen at UNLV. Many of the students I work with need the extra time to adjust and integrate on campus. 15 credits is very overwhelming and when they ask to lower their course loads, they are often discouraged.

I am becoming more and more concerned that the implementation of Workday will cause a long term setback to the mission of becoming Top Tier. President Jessup's message yesterday was sobering in that he specifically zeroed in on payroll processing and then said there would be bumps along the way and patience is appreciated. That doesn't inspire confidence that the payroll system is ready and I haven't heard anything about a backup plan to make sure that everyone is paid on time in case the system fails. Many employees of UNLV live paycheck to paycheck and can't afford late charges for rent or house payments. Is UNLV prepared to reimburse those who incur late charges for these things in the event that the payroll changeover isn't as successful as everyone anticipates? My rental company won't waive the late fees if I show them the President's message. Do Top Tier schools have a "Plan B" for any new system that may not work initially as expected?

Https and Facebook

Many of our goals are geared toward diversity, openness and inclusivity; however, our world and nation are becoming more and more xenophobic. We hear from our university leadership about the huge bump we had post-debate in admission applications, but are we concerned that our university will lose students from foreign countries because they can no longer get visas or because they no longer feel safe in America or will see the number of local students from Nevada drop off who fear deportation for them or their families if they provide too much information to the university? Many prospective students, around the time of the debate, thought we would have a president who cared about them; since that time, we have elected one who does not.

I believe that faculty in Top Tier institutions should respect their contractual obligations and understand that all job requirements must be fulfilled. Spring commencement is right around the corner and although our department Chair has sent two email reminders and announced in a department meeting that everyone must attend, at least half of our faculty have told him they won't be there. They didn't ask for permission to be excused, they announced that they weren't going because they had made travel plans, committed to other events, were expecting visitors from another city, it takes the whole morning, etc. All of their contracts state that they have to attend but they seem to think it's optional. My Chair tried diligently to make it clear that they have to attend and he was virtually ignored.

An issue that needs to be address that will affect UNLV is the lack of clear and constant communication between the departments, HR, and AP. Policy and procedure should not be left up to interpretation nor should it based on who is reviewing the document. A manual (with examples) should be easily located and frequently updated for administrative assistants and administrative faculty. If UNLV continues to move forward and improve, but fails to keep everyone informed and held to the same standard, that will be detrimental to its growth and progress.

I believe that if the lack of police officers and their supporting staff does not get addressed it will have severe repercussions for the University. Increase students, expanding the University, and having extended class hours will require an increase in officers. For their safety and for the safety of our students.
More focus on money and research than the students who are in school now. It is as if the students just don't matter. There are many problems to deal with now, and situations that need to be solved - but those are all being pushed under the carpet.

Creating a campus life. The area immediately around campus is still undesirable and unsafe. Until you create an environment where students want to live, you won't be able to attract the same level of students as ASU, etc.

There could be more funding for programs like Americorp that will train students for skill-based jobs. Americorp is a volunteer program that assists in educating students to prepare them to work. There could be training programs for business, health care that will give the student the training in their field in entry-level positions to prepare the student in their special field of learning to engage in life-long skills that will prepare them to work.

Providing the students with the knowledge base that may be applied in the real world.

Can anyone please tell me why the administrative staff in our Dean's Office is allowed to come to work on Fridays with threadbare patches and holes in their jeans? This is not appropriate attire even for "casual Friday". We have to "dress for success" and our Dean's and Executive Offices should set the tone/example/requirement.

If we want to call ourselves diverse, we have to be diverse in every area and that includes political diversity. I innocently said that I voted for President Trump and I have become a pariah in my department. I don't agree with everything that he says or does but he is a Washington outsider and he will change things. I didn't want more of the same and in my opinion, despite his many drawbacks, he was the lesser of two evils. I'm entitled to that opinion and as far as I know, UNLV is still part of the United States where we have the freedom to vote for whatever candidate we feel will do the best job. I was appalled at the number of meetings that were held on campus after the election so that people could cry and whine and wring their hands because Hillary didn't win. I supported President Obama but some people couldn't stand him and I don't remember any meetings on campus for people who didn't get their own way and couldn't cope after he was elected.

Terrible business procedures; improper/inadequate training; awful internal customer services; apathy; bad attitude of employees; trainwreck of a website which makes finding workflow, procedures or instructions for employees impossible. Employees who try their hardest to work well within this broken university are treated like jerks. UNLV sets up employees for failure. Those who persevere are thick-skinned to being demeaned and demoralized or they are disinterested in helping students, colleagues or the university. Employees are expected to know minute details yet do not receive training, communication or notice. When an error is made, rather than teaching an employee the proper procedure, one is sent an extremely unhelpful, uninformative and snide response from [insert one of many ill-natured UNLV departments here - i.e. Shipping and Receiving, Reprographics, Inventory Control].

Poor advisement for entering Graduate students, particularly in Master of Special Education BCBA emphasis

I don't think we will ever be able to achieve Top Tier status until we hold the Department Chairs accountable for making the faculty accountable in following policies and laws. Our faculty consistently, willfully, does things against policy, overspends their budgets, makes after-the-fact purchases for reimbursement, and uses graduate students for personal tasks. Our Chair makes an excuse for them every time. It's not even worth letting him know about it anymore. A perfect example is that although most of our faculty are required to attend graduation per their contracts, almost none of them are going. They all know that our Chair will be okay with it if they aren't there so for the past two weeks there has been a steady stream of faculty making one excuse after another about why they can't be at graduation and he has given every one of them permission to stay away.

The additional payment to the active faculty is a very important way to motivate faculty to submit more proposals and receive more funding to sponsor the graduate students and postdoc and the faculty themselves. Otherwise, if we have 3 summer months covered from the existing grants, we do not have further motivation to submit more proposals.

I'm a PhD student at the Department of Mathematical Sciences. 1. The timeline for program is not determined. Most schools have a set timeline of 4 years. In program handbook it says: "Most students it takes about 6 years to finish". This takes off responsibility from everyone except for student to graduate within reasonable amount of time. 2. I passed qualifying exams and cannot find an advisor. Seems like most professors are overloaded. 3. For PhD in Statistics graduation requirements in schools like Cornell and Wharton and many others have been changed. Instead of requiring one long dissertation student should publish 3 papers in peer-reviewed journals.
Then stapling those papers together comprises a dissertation. This is now an industry standard. This provides necessary research activity for both student and institution. 4. The system of being allowed to have an advisor after passing qualifying examination is not perfect. By the time a student passes qualifying examination, he has also completed course requirements. After that students picks an advisor. This way adviser has no opportunity to shape student's skills anymore. The best time to do so was when student was selecting coursework. 5. It would be nice to collaborate with other departments and see what statisticians could do for them.

Southern Nevada is limited by a tourist-centric economy; ultimately this centricity imposes limitations on higher education funding and legislative actions which otherwise would positively impact the culture in Nevada. To mitigate these impacts, UNLV must seek ever closers connections with industry and lobby tirelessly for stable State special fund tax revenue funding sources.

I feel as though Facilities has been ignored. Student and facultys treatment of the maintenance department is a crucial element that largely gets ignored. It causes poor productivity and attention to detail. People tend care more when they feel some sort of acknowledgement.

I believe that UNLV needs to GIS Map and lay out its campus in a way that will help promote Top Tier research. See my suggestions below.

UNLV needs to show that it cares about its academic reputation. It should invest in its faculty and in its students. By bringing in even a few recognized names in various fields, the reputation of the university will increase significantly. By giving more support to at least a few excellent graduate students, faculty members at colleges across the country will consider sending talented undergraduates to study will the new UNLV faculty.. By encouraging students to finish in 4 years, we would improve how we appear in many rankings. We would also encourage our students to think of themselves as full time students rather than as student-workers who hold down full time jobs while completing their degrees. They would do better work and would be more enriched by our programs.

One concern is that UNLV seems to try to achieve "top tier" status by attempting to match various metrics of other known top tier institutions, when it is very well possible that those metrics are the outcome rather than the cause of other institutions' status. Rather than match other schools on the basis of grant funds, graduation statistics, etc., it may be worth trying to understand where higher education is going (what are the current goals of top tier institutions?). The metrics we've used to develop our top tier plan may well reflect top tier goals of the past rather than the present.

We will never achieve Top Tier status until we can show enough integrity to ensure that every employee is paid on time and correctly. Our office had to request a hand-write check and we were told that payroll had so many requests for hand-writes that it would probably be a couple of days before we got it. This has happened every summer for several years now. One of the cornerstones for a solid infrastructure is paying associates correctly and on time. And I think that we are regularly breaking federal law by allowing people to work and then not issuing them a paycheck in a timely manner.
Do you have some constructive suggestions?

We should do whatever we can to help our undocumented students, but we should do it quietly, and not create a whole week of celebratory events centered around people who are here illegally.

Allow students who are registered with the DRC to adjust their schedules to allow for transition and integration to the campus. This will keep them as students longer. Students on the Spectrum need some "safe" spaces on campus to process the stimuli that they are being bombarded with on a daily basis.

I think there should be numerous "test runs" for payroll and I think that an alternative payment method should be in place as a back up in the event that people don't get paid properly or on time. One cardinal rule in business is that you don't mess with your employees' money.

Https and Facebook

Be transparent about the numbers. If enrollment goes down or even if the number of students who applied dwindles as a result of the new administration in Washington, let us know how this affects how long it will take us to achieve Top Tier status.

Professors in Top Tier schools support their students by attending graduation. They take seriously the requirements of their jobs and contractual obligations. My department faculty shows up when they feel like it and mostly they don’t feel like going. I believe there should be a very strong message sent from both the President and Provost about the importance of fulfilling this obligation. I believe there should be some form of recording attendance for faculty, and I believe there has to be some form of correction or consequences for those who willfully continue not to attend.

One of the areas that should be re-evaluated is the P-Card system. There needs to be an additional check-point prior to approval, and more frequent audits especially at the departmental level. Typically an administrative assistant's Statement of Accounts is being approved by a department chair who isn't reviewing the transactions. Either because a lack of time, or lack of policy knowledge. It could be an entire year before the card has an audit which may be too late to correct any mistakes. I would suggest either a committee for the University or a person in each College / unit to be the person to review each transaction; or my second suggestion would be to have the Statement of Accounts be submitted to Accounts Payable for review. Furthermore, I would like to suggest a re-evaluation of the spending at the University as a whole, and the lack of functionality of the budget systems in place. Budget, bookkeeping, accounting basics are being ignored across the board, resulting in over-spending and a lack of accountability. Find reliable, renewable vendors and products; purge the old systems and vendors; and consider buying in bulk for basic office supplies.

I would like to suggest that the University consider having their own hospital, similar to Yale Student Health (http://yalehealth.yale.edu/find-clinicians-and-departments/departments). This hospital is open to students, faculty and staff, and their family members. The benefits are endless, but some worth mentioning are job opportunities for a wide range of students - medical, foreign languages, human resources, etc.; morale for the staff because great medical care is being provided to them; and financial benefits to the University because all the health related revenue and expenses stay in-house rather than the insurance paying another provider.

UNLV is a very large campus with a great number of departments needed to work in conjunction with one another to operate smoothly. There are times when a change in process is needed, or an important announcement needs to be made that may not be applicable or pertinent to everyone on campus. I would suggest looking into the possibility of creating a news/announcement system for support departments that allows people to sign up for messages. A message from the lock shop pertaining to turning in keys may not be important to a department chair however it would be quite valuable to an office manager. While UNLV Today is the current system I believe that many important bits of information are lost among the great sea of content.

Yes
Purchase as much land around campus as possible--or work with developers to buy the apartments on the other side of Maryland Parkway. Then revitalize Maryland Parkway to make it a place students want to live. Maryland Parkway should be a la Mill Ave.

Training could be conducted in class settings or through a series of seminars to conduct the training in specific fields.

Workforce development involvement in certification programs for the vocational student to assess the skills to find work in specific programs such as accounting, computer technology, technical writing, data entry, teaching assistant, online teaching assistant.

If we want to be Top Tier, we have to act like we are Top Tier and we need to start doing it yesterday. Allowing administrative staff to come to work dressed improperly doesn't send the right message to anyone on campus much less community members or donors. And at the Dean's Office level, it's particularly disturbing. Business office personnel should be required to wear appropriate business clothing. If the office observes "casual Friday", clothing should still be business casual.

We need to "walk our talk". If we are truly diverse, that means creating a culture where people who respectfully disagree with the majority point of view are still safe and treated with dignity. That includes politics and medical care and religious beliefs.

Hiring professors who have experience conducting research and dealing with diverse TierOneundergrad populations regardless of socioeconomic status or ethnic background

Please, please, please create a MANDATORY training for Department Chairs that occurs at least once a month every month. Make it clear to them that some departments are not "above the law" and they all have to follow policies, procedures, and state laws. Provide an avenue where administrative assistants can "blow the whistle" when the Chair will not do anything about an egregious issue and then truly hold the Chairs accountable. They should not be getting glowing evaluations when they don't lead properly.

The additional payment to the active faculty is a very important way to motivate faculty to submit more proposals and receive more funding to sponsor the graduate students and postdoc and the faculty themselves. Otherwise, if we have 3 summer months covered from the existing grants, we do not have further motivation to submit more proposals.

1. Change graduation requirements for PhD in statistics to publishing 3 papers rather then writing one dissertation. 2. Set a specific timeline for a program 3. Make sure every student gets appropriate advisement 4. Create a specific program handbook for each track and concentration specifying what is supposed to happen and when and what are the rights, expectations and obligations of a student.

Appropriation is one key element in any plan, and to achieve something great, UNLV must first let go of some things which are already very good. For example, if the College of Hotel Administration were limited to a smaller portion of funding, then world class researchers could be recruited more effectively and world class facilities could be invested in and fostered.

Appreciate a maintenance worker, spotlight their contribution, maybe with a lunch or a shirt once in awhile to show the campus cares. There are a lot of bitter employees, while the burden isn't Totally on the campus there is more that can be done.

I believe that UNLV should take a look at Stanford University as an example on how to lay out a university campus. By looking at the Stanford University road and buildings map, UNLV can lay out its campus in a similar way. Stanford Hospital/Medical School, university entrance, dorms, student union and football stadium are all located very closely together. UNLV might create a university entrance similar to what Stanford University has created; an arch, palm trees, oval drive way etc. This might mean buying up a few blocks of land near the current UNLV entrance and reconstructing a more impressive entrance. A new high end shopping center/Mall might be build close to the UNLV campus, like how Stanford University shows on its map. ........https://campus-map.stanford.edu/

Other universities that wanted to put themselves on the map, like Vanderbilt, invested money in bringing in "big name" academics and offered support for their graduate students. Hire 5 renowned scientists and 5 renowned social scientists or humanities professors. Establish grad fellowships that compete with those offered by some top tier universities. Along with this, give undergraduate students strong incentives to finish in four years (tuition breaks or penalties to those who take more than 6 years). Raise admissions standards, at least modestly.
The emphasis on grant funding is short-sighted. In particular, the notion that grant funds will be the bottom line determiner of resource allocation, especially space, is going to penalize people who do research that is top notch but not necessarily expensive to conduct. There are plenty of excellent areas of scholarship that would enhance UNLV’s reputation and prominence and national/global contribution yet they do not require as much funding. As I understand some of the new top tier plans, such inexpensive but high quality research programs will be at the bottom of the priority list relative to more expensive research programs. This is not only unfair, but it leads a disproportionate investment in research programs that depend utterly on large grants and so if for whatever reason those research programs do not get funding, those researchers cannot thrive. UNLV should consider building infrastructure to support all types of research and come up with nuanced metrics of research and scholarship that depend on more than just grant dollars. Impact factor, citation index, media attention, educational impact etc., are all potential variables to consider and there are probably many more.

I've submitted feedback before about the need for increased capacity in our Financial Aid and Scholarships office. Today I spoke with a student who has tried to call the Financial Aid office several times and hasn't been able to get through. She gets a message that says the phone line is at maximum capacity and to call back later. It doesn’t give her the option to stay on hold or leave a message. I emailed someone in the office to see if they could give the student a call, and I received this response: "Unfortunately it's often true that our lines are at capacity and once full, no new calls can be added until a call is answered. We don't have much of a line at our office and considering that she has a 702 phone number, I would suggest she just come in to the office to resolve the issue. I know this may seem not very customer service friendly, but we staff our front desk and our phones all day and I would have to pull someone off of those duties in order to contact this student, which undermines the wait time that other students are experiencing. The old adage hold true for us at this time, 'if I do this for one student, I have to do it it for all students.' Unless of course you are advocating on behalf of this student and if you are aware of an extenuating circumstance surrounding her experience with UNLV. If that is the case, then we can discuss that route in more detail." This response demonstrates the necessity for improved resources at our Financial Aid office, whether that means better telephone infrastructure or more people to handle incoming calls.

This is a very easy "fix". Spend the salary dollars to staff the Human Resources Department properly. They simply need "more hands on deck". Secondly, spend the necessary money to train these people. The time and money spent in training will bring a huge return, not only in compliance with all federal laws and employee satisfaction. It will show employees that UNLV is committed to doing the right thing. Right now, it doesn't really look that way.
Q12 - Would you like a response?

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Q10 - Topics

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