State of the University
September 22, 2011

Neal Smatresk
President of UNLV

What We Will Cover Today
• Review of the legislative session.
• Budget cuts and our fiscal status.
• Planning progress recap.
• Our vision going forward.
• Priorities for rebuilding UNLV.

Legislative Priorities from the Session
• Maintain current funding, end furloughs, restore COLA, merit and maintain benefits.
• Keep tuition & registration fees to invest on campus, and separate them from the formula.
• Request formula study. – Process started
• Request funds to support economic diversification and job creation in Nevada. – AB 449
• Educate legislators & local stakeholders on the value of UNLV.

Our Budget
• We received half the originally proposed cut.
• We lost $73M and over 700 positions since 2007.
• Furloughs and salary cuts implemented.
• Our students are paying 13% more in tuition.
• Benefits have been seriously cut.
• We are covering the load through your hard work and commitment to UNLV.
The Good News

- We are on solid financial ground and have a sustainable budget.
- We protected tenure at UNLV.
- We protected students and core academic programs.
- We did not cut GA lines.
- We anticipate no more cuts to programs or personnel.

Our Current Fiscal Status

- We need $14M in bridge funding this year, but the pay date shift will generate over $17M in one time funds.
- We have a pool of one time funds available for strategic investments.
- We have about $1M for hires and will replace faculty and staff as they are lost.
- A second tuition increase, if approved by the BoR, will generate between $6.5 & $8.5M.

Health Care and PEBP

- PEBP benefits fell dramatically.
- Led by UNLV, NSHE is seeking a health care consultant group to help us investigate our health care options.
- We want to move out of PEBP.
- We are discussing direct supplemental health care benefits with the BoR.
- We are concerned about possible financial incentives/penalties tied to participation in wellness programs.

Progress on FY11 Priorities

- Implement differential tuition, expand self-funded programs, use Educational Outreach to generate new revenue streams. - completed
- Develop funding model to improve freshman enrollment & success, and support upper division & graduate education. – implemented 13% tuition increase, awaiting formula study
- Collaborate with Deans & Faculty Senate to implement General Education plan & 1st year programs. – expect an approved plan this year
Progress on FY11 Priorities

• Expand Brookings educational/curriculum partnerships, make participating faculty Brookings Fellows. - faculty and students working with Brookings scholars, and Brookings minor being drafted with UNLV faculty
• Lincy Institute Faculty and Graduate Fellowships for 2011 will be awarded this fall. - completed
• Updated Strategic Planning priorities. - completed
• Improve our culture/commitment to diversity. - Recommendations from Faculty Senate and PAC forthcoming

Key Planning Priorities: Education

• Improve scholarships to recruit more highly qualified freshmen.
• General Education Plan and 1st year programs to offer a better qualified student body a more rigorous curriculum.
• Recruit exceptional & diverse faculty to enhance offerings, reputation, & rankings.
• Establish strong faculty mentoring programs to enhance retention & faculty success.
• Work with K-12 to require ACTs and improve college readiness.
• Communicate our quality image to prospective students, the region & the world.

Focus 50 to 100 - Is our Plan Still Relevant?

• An aligned campus community with a shared identity and values.
• Better educational effectiveness & student success.
• Decisions driven by planning & improved focus.
• Better community & legislative effectiveness.
• Research themes to guide investments and a more collaborative research environment.
• Improved image & rankings.

Key Planning Priorities: Research

• Hire faculty teams to enhance strengths & reputation.
• Develop a regional economic development interface with public & private stakeholders.
• Prioritize extramural funding success and support.
• Increase GA stipends to incentivize Ph.D. student recruitment & retention.
• Reorganize Graduate College and reconstitute the Faculty Research Council.
• Address needs for research space & infrastructure.
• Develop relevant research experiences for all students.
• Maintain library capacity to support research.
Key Planning Priorities: Infrastructure

- Improve health benefits & restore salaries.
- Develop funding formula that supports upper division, graduate education, and research.
- Develop IT Master plan, improve instructional technology, and support development of iNtegrate.
- Support campus master planning, UNL VNow and the Midtown Vision.
- Improve promotion and tenure processes.
- Enhance student support and customer service.

Key Investments to Implement our Plan

- Make approximately 30 high impact and opportunity hires.
- Increase Ph.D. stipends effective Fall 12.
- Accelerate IT planning and implementation.
- Proceed with iNtegrate 2.
- Develop comprehensive faculty mentoring program to better recruit, retain & support faculty.
- Create an Office of Economic Development.

What does UNLV 2.0 look like?

- More selective with an emphasis on student success and freshman enrollment.
- Better learning and research environments for an increasingly qualified and diverse student and faculty body.
- Increased emphasis on scholarship and research to build reputation and improve extramural funding.
- Expanded commitment to economic diversification through focused hires and programs.
- Focused growth around a core of sustainable programs.
UNLV
Rise with us
The past few years have been a difficult period for the UNLV community. We are all, students, staff and faculty, hopeful that by now the university has weathered the worst of the storm and is moving forward onto solid financial footing. We all remain deeply concerned about our long term prospects to achieve our goals of offering broad opportunity for our students, of enhancing our regent's competitive position as a research university and of improving the quality of life for our families on campus and across the valley. Well the outcome of last spring cannot be considered a victory. UNLV did stand together on behalf of affordable, quality higher education in the service of Nevada. We, as a campus, spoke passionately and affectively that our research achievements, our educational commitment to our students and our value to Las Vegas. This fall, as we have for the past few years, our faculty and our staff continue to show our belief in UNLV by working creatively and harder, by teaching extra courses, by advising additional students, by shouldering heavier responsibilities in service of students. And all of us are reaching out farther and better to serve our community. That energy and that effort gives me such pride in our UNLV faculty, in our staff and such high hopes for our students. Based on these past few years of collaboration, I have confidence that whatever course we, as a campus, chart will set high academic standards and we'll pursue clear academic priorities and we'll do so together. I'm now proud to introduce the president of the university, Neal Smatresk, to address where we are as a campus, the challenges we face and how UNLV is moving forward. President Smatresk.

[ Applause ]

Thank you very much, Greg. And I want to say to everybody, the faculty senate has been an incredible partner over the past few years. The leadership of the faculty senate has certainly stepped up to help us through all of the various cuts and crisis we've had and Greg will be a terrific partner this year. He's already off to a fast start and I look for great things to come in the partnership between administration, faculty and the faculty senate and the rest of our staff. Thank you, Greg. It would be inappropriate for me to start any other way right now than by acknowledging a few people and then by really acknowledging the hard work that all of you have put into this university in the past few years. I would like to briefly acknowledge, and I hope I haven't missed anybody here, I see president emeritus Carol Harter here. Thank you for coming, Carol.

[ Applause ]

And I heard that president emeritus Pat Goodall would be here, although I don't see him. He might be back there somewhere. We can thank him as well.

[ Applause ]

And I want to just ask if the deans and the vice presidents will stand up and let us acknowledge you as part of the team who have ably led this university through the past few years of tough weather.

[ Applause ]

Now while I've singled out some individuals for recognition, I would tell all of you that the first order of business is to say we have pulled together over the past few years and it's the compassion and commitment of the faculty and staff here, as Greg so ably stated, that has held this university together. Universities are not created from brick and mortar, they're made from people. And the people at this university are committed to division with dedication and making sure that we will move forward and continue to build, continue to serve our state, continue to serve our students and to create a more prosperous future. It is you, sitting in the audience, it is those folks who couldn't come here today, it is the faculty and staff of UNLV who I am so proud of and so thankful for and I wish we could all join in a round of applause for everything we have achieved together to make sure that we're on solid ground.

[ Applause ]

Now let's see if I can make the technology work. Today we will cover several substantive issues. We'll review the legislative session. We will discuss budget cuts and our current fiscal status. We'll have a planning progress recap, because it was time to tune up and brush off our strategic plan. We'll look at our vision going forward. And we'll look at the priorities that we will establish this year through our implementation teams for rebuilding UNLV. If we take a look at what was certainly a challenging year, if we had a series of legislative priorities that I put out in our last state of the university address. We sought to maintain current funding and the furloughs restore [inaudible] merit and merit and maintain our benefits. I will tell you we did not succeed. We didn't succeed all by ourselves, we had lots of help. And many, many good people in the Nevada system of higher education...
>> education led by the chancellor and many of our board of regents certainly was in the fray
>> with us, we were working hard on these issues. And it simply wasn't something that in the
>> current fiscal climate we were able to achieve. We also asked if we could keep our own
>> tuition and registration fees to invest them on campus so that our students had confidence
>> that the funds that they gave to the university were being invested in their education. And
>> we wanted to separate our tuition and fees from the formula. We did not achieve this. We will
>> not give up, but it is a critical issue for all of us. We requested a formula study and I'm
>> pleased to announce that under the leadership of the provost and the board of regents and our
>> legislators, the formula study committees are forming and the formula study will begin. And I
>> think that that's going to be a critical piece of how we move forward. We requested funds to
>> support economic diversification and job creation in Nevada. We received AB449. It is not a
>> highly funded bill, but it is a platform that we are going to be able to build on going
>> forward. And we also sought to educate legislators and local stakeholders on the value of
>> UNLV. And while I'll say it's times that felt like a pyrrhic fight, I believe at the end we
>> got through to them. We got through to them through the chancellor's four point plan. And we
>> gained many allies from the business community and our legislature in support of the mission
>> of higher education and its central importance to our state. Let's turn to our budget. And
>> I'm going to give you a fairly terse summary of the challenges we've been through. Last year
>> we had an initial set of proposals that would have been and represented draconian cuts at
>> this university. We received about half of the originally proposed cut. And as Greg Brown
>> said, while we don't declare that a victory it was certainly better than it could have been
>> and left us able to manage our way through the budget crisis. But we have lost 73 million
>> dollars and over 700 positions. I'm sorry, I'm not keeping up here. We have lost 73 million
>> dollars and over 700 positions since 2007. Furloughs and salary cuts have been implemented.
>> Our students are paying 13 percent more in tuition and we thank them and hope that we'll be
>> able to continue to give them the classes that they need to precede in a timely fashion. Our
>> benefits have been seriously cut. And we are covering the load here at UNLV, because the load
>> is nearly the same as it was at our peak, through your hard work and commitment to UNLV. Now
>> the good news, and I think this is something I hope we will all internalize, we are on solid
>> financial ground and we have a sustainable budget going forward. Through the hard work of our
>> chief financial officer, our provost and the cabinet, we made sure that we had cuts that
>> reflected the cuts that were delivered to us, we prepared vigorously and far in advance to
>> meet this session, which we knew was going to be a low water mark for Nevada. And at this
>> point, I believe we have a sustainable budget going forward. Perhaps most importantly through
>> the sacrifice of many faculty members who took the TV [inaudible] that we offered we were
>> able to protect tenure at UNLV. This is a fundamental principle of our university, it's a
>> commitment that I made last year and I'm pleased to tell you that through the worst budget
>> crisis that we've faced in Nevada history we did not eliminate tenured or tenure tracked
>> faculty.
>>
>> [ Applause ]

>> While we have lost programs and program structure, we protected students at our core academic
>> programs. And I think this is critical because students need to know they have a solid set of
>> programs that they can select from as they go forward to complete their careers and career
>> aspirations. We were worried at one point that we were going to have to very significantly
>> cut GA lines as part of our budget cutting maneuvers. We protected those GA lines and we're
>> proud to say that we'll build on that success of protecting them as you'll see in a later
>> part of this discussion. And at this point I will tell you I believe that short of global
>> economic meltdown, and if you looked at the stock market today there could be a legitimate
>> worry, I believe that we are at a low water mark. And while we know we still have a
>> structural deficit in our budget going forward, as we see tourism on the strip pick up and as
>> we see revenues increase, the size of that structural deficit will shrink. And this year the
>> size of that deficit was about, was the size of the sunsettled taxes that were renewed. So I
>> am confident that our legislators will put together either an appropriated package of sunsets
>> and continue them or an appropriate set of new tax policies that will allow us to stabilize
>> our budgets and build on solid ground as we go forward. And I want this to be a key feature
>> of what you take away today. We are on solid financial ground. I'm planting a flag in the
>> bottom. We've been looking down and it's time to start looking up again.
>>
>> [ Applause ]

>> We should talk about exactly what our current fiscal status is. And you know that I believe
>> in transparency of all of the numbers that we produce for the university. This year, in order
>> to catch up to the budget that we will have implemented, we have 14 million dollars of bridge
>> funding as a hole in our budget. But because of the pay date shift, and I know there's been
>> confusion about that, so let me please make sure everyone here understands. Everyone who
>> works here will be paid for every day they work.

http://go.unlv.edu/assets/president/transcripts/2011SOTU.txt 1/20/2012
But through the expedient measure of shifting of payday from the end of the month to the beginning of the next month, we will be able to generate approximately 17 million dollars in one time funds and that will cover the bridge funding that we need to move through this year. It's a trick you can do once, now is the time to do it. We have also been prudent. We prepared an adequate reserve level because we didn't know how big the cuts were going to be. The cuts could have truly been catastrophic and we would not saved we would have been poor financial managers of this institution. The cuts weren't as large as we expected and that affords a measure of opportunity because we now have a pool of one time funds available for strategic investments back into the infrastructure of our university to help us achieve our vision. And finally, we have about a million dollars for hires and we can replace faculty and staff members going forward as they are lost. We will continue to do so as strategically as possible. And if the board of regents grants an additional tuition increase to the Nevada system of higher education, we could generate another 6.5 to 8.5 million dollars of go forward money that we can use for the rebuilding effort and for staffing back in highly critical areas and areas where the state needs our support and areas where our students need our support. Now I have to pull out and discuss very separately our health care benefits and PEBP. If there's one issue I have heard repeatedly as I have gone to faculty meetings around this campus, it's that the health care benefit plan that we have this year is hurting our faculty, it's hurting our staff, it's making it difficult for people to get critically needed health care, to afford prescription medications, and in fact it is perhaps one of the largest and most significant of the cuts that we saw coming out of this session last year. We know our benefits fell dramatically, but the good news is led by UNLV and Gerry Bomotti, and you all know just how tough Gerry is, the Nevada system of higher education and Bart Patterson are seeking a health care consultant group to help us investigate our options. And I would say, unequivocally, at least for UNLV, we want to move out of PEBP.

Now I'm going to quote, or perhaps misquote, our chancellor. Health care benefits, an amateur elected board, what could possibly go wrong? We'll be discussing a direct supplement to our health care benefits if we can't successfully achieve our goal of moving out of PEBP with our board of regents and we hope that we'll be able to offer you some hope for a better benefits package next year. I know how critically you all want this. And we are also continuing to look at and track possible financial incentives or penalties tied to participation in the wellness program. But you need to know that this is a top priority. The council of presidents discusses it virtually every single meeting. Our chancellor is highly supportive of it. And our board of regents are going to help us to move forward and to get a benefits package that we can use to recruit and retain as opposed to dissuade. Now one of the pieces of this speech, which is a mandatory piece, is to review the commitments we made last year to move forward and to talk about what success we had on them. Last year we listed approximately six major goals that we were trying to achieve along with the many things we do every day. First, we proposed that we should implement differential tuition, expand self funded programs and use education outreach to generate new revenue streams. I'm proud to say those efforts were successful. The board approved them. The programs that are benefiting from differential tuition and self funding are stable. They were not on the chopping blocks. And we have been quite entrepreneurial in generating funding streams that support us and help the provost to manage an academic budget that has been a bit challenging, especially around part time fees. So I'm going to say we've done a good job on that one. We've completed it and we'll continue to look for entrepreneurial opportunities. We proposed to develop a funding model that would help improve freshmen enrollment and success, some of you've heard me discuss the rebel challenge, and to support upper division and graduate education. At this point we've raised tuition 13 percent this year. In the face of such a large raise, we have to take a wait and see attitude to see what subsequent increases we'll see in tuition, because we know for our students that creates barriers to access. And we also have to await the results of a formula study, which I hope will offer us the ability to fund and incentivize the funding of bachelors and advanced degrees in a region that critically needs those degrees. And finally we're going to collaborate with deans and faculty senate to implement general education plans and first year programs. That was a high priority last year. We didn't quite get it across the finish line, but I think we had very healthy discussions. As ably led by Cecilia Maldonado, and I know she's out there somewhere, and by Greg Brow, we think we will be able to move forward and get approval for beginning to implement a plan through this year. We said we were going to expand our Brookings educational and curriculum partnerships and make participating faculty Brookings fellows. This is one of the great rays of light that I believe we've experienced in the past few years. Our Brookings interaction has led to so many productive interactions between faculty, students and Brookings fellows. We have much better connections to Washington, inside the beltway connections, we are publishing the Brookings Mountain Monitor, which is increasingly becoming an important piece of our communications strategy.
viewed as a high quality source of information about the economic health of the metros in the
inter mountain west. And our faculty and students are working with Brookings scholars to
create a Brookings minor. And that's currently being drafted with the help of UNLV faculty. I
think that we have a lot to celebrate in the success of our interaction with Brookings. And
it certainly brings credit and reputation to this university. The Lincy Institute faculty and
graduate fellowships for 2011 should have been awarded last year. That was one of the
commitments we made. In fact, we have awarded them. They're working hard. In many cases
they're working with Brookings faculty. And I would want to recognize Lindy Schumacher, who I
know is out in the audience, for her great efforts with the Lincy Institute and just say this
is something that we're also very proud of and we believe is one of the great paths forward
to helping this region to produce the human capital that it needs.

[ Applause ]

We said it was time to give our strategic plan focus 5100 an update and you're going to see
the results of that soon. We've done a nice splice job between faculty senate input and
administrative input and I'll talk about that momentarily. And we said that we were going to
improve our culture and commitment to diversity. We delivered a campus climate survey. The
recommendations from the faculty senate and the presidential advisory committee will be
forthcoming. I know that great progress has been made in that area and that will be part of
what I will say in the next faculty senate meeting on Tuesday. So I look forward to the recommendations and then I look forward
to engaging the office of university initiatives now led by vice president Luis Valera, to
tackle the challenging issues we face around diversity and campus climate. Now I want to step
back and I want to talk about the planning tune up. And the first thing I want you to do is
to remember a little bit about what we said we wanted out of focus 50 to 100. And if you
haven't read it for awhile, maybe go to our website and take a look. Because I will tell you
that if you look at that plan, it's a solid plan. It's a good plan for moving us forward. It
is quite encompassing and it had a number of implementation points that I'm very proud to
tell you that we successfully have put into play and implemented over the past three years.
But what did we say we wanted? And is our plan still relevant? We asked for an aligned campus
community with shared identity and values. We're moving in that direction. I believe that you
can see especially through our accreditation visit that we were very successful in having a
campus community that gathered together and supported our accreditation efforts and supported
great vision for UNLV going forward. We said we wanted better educational effectiveness and
student success. Our retention for freshmen has steadily gone up. Our six year graduation
rates have steadily improved. We've implemented the academic success center and we're proud
to move forward. I just got to give you a great statistic. If a student visits the academic
success center, it doesn't matter what class they're in, what year they're in, they have a 94
percent chance of being retained the following year. That's an amazing statistic.
Congratulations to Ann and David Burgess for that.

[ Applause ]

Our freshmen retention rate will be approximately 80 percent this year, which is well above
the state university national average. It is something that has been growing steadily since
we've been here and reflects a commitment to providing a warm and success inducing atmosphere
for our students. We are also going to continue to drive home our efforts around educational
effectiveness, as you'll see momentarily. We said we wanted decisions driven by planning and
improved focus. I think that while the budget cuts have certainly not expanded our efforts as
an educational institution, they have forced us to evaluate what the core of our university
is and what is the strategic base that we will build off of going forward. And I do believe
we're using data far more effectively than we have to evaluate what is critical for this
campus. We said we wanted to have better community and legislative effectiveness. I will tell
you that our partnerships with business through our foundation and through our legislators
have improved steadily and hopefully that will translate into an improved fiscal climate for
our university in the near future. We said we would use research themes to guide investments
and we wanted to create a more collaborative research environment. And there's ample evidence
of that. And again, the effort revolving around how we focus limited investments will be
critical in the plans of this university going forward. And we said we wanted improved image
and rankings. I would submit to you that the plan is still relevant and now what we need to
do is to ask some questions through our planning tune up about what our priorities are going
forward. As a result of a strategic planning retreat that had administrative, student,
faculty representation as well as pro staff representation in it, and as the result of a
faculty senate exercise in planning and planning priorities, we have identified the following
priorities as part of our planning tune up. And I'm going to tell you, these are generally
consistent with the original focus 50 to 100 plan, however they represent slightly different
emphasis in terms of how we move forward. First we said we wanted to improve scholarships to
recruit more highly qualified freshmen. And again, while we don't have the resources to
We will also have some continuing funds going forward, again, primarily contingent on board
careful fiscal management. We will have one time funds that we can invest in things
of regents decisions around registration fees and tuition. We will begin this year to make a
graduate college leads the research team. These teams are charged with helping us to
road. And that is can we finance the dreams that we have? And how will we do that? Through,
implement our plan. But let me talk to you now for a moment about where the rubber hits the
and we've always had many, many different items on our wish list. Where the rubber hits the
out of the planning exercise. Number one, improve health benefits and restore competitive
salaries so that we can continue to be a competitive university. And while this is
challenging, I think we need to seek from our legislators and our board of regents an idea
about when the cuts will end and when we may begin to look forward. Of course, our
legislators will have a lot to say about that. We need to develop a funding formula that
already begun. And we are going to reconstitute the faculty research council. We need to
address our needs for research space and infrastructure, develop relevant research
experiences for all of our students, because that's one of our great educational benefits of
a research institution. And, of course, if we're going to pursue a vigorous research agenda,
we need to maintain our library's capacity to support research. The infrastructure list
should actually be far longer than this, but I'm going to summarize the priorities that came
out of the planning exercise. Number one, improve health benefits and restore competitive
Will begin replacing interim appointments in executive leadership with national searches for highly qualified people who can help lead us into a very high quality future, who can show the rest of the country that Nevada's not dead in the water, but that we're still growing and we're prospering and we're moving forward. We want to increase PhD stipends, effective fall of 12. I will be specific. In order to incentivize PhD production we would like to add 1,000 dollars to the base PhD stipend for an entering student and 2,000 dollars for a student who has achieved qualifications to officially be termed a PhD student, whether it's prelims, oral defense, as they move forward. So a total of 3,000 dollars difference from the current PhD stipend level. This is still short of nationally competitive in every area. But it is a very positive step in the right direction to help us recruit strong, great students who will bolster our research efforts and go out and build credibility for us as they assume high level academic positions and positions in the private sector. We will accelerate our IT planning and implementation. I've talked to you about integrate two, but we are looking at server space, access to our partners as Switch Communications to the cloud, which I think is a growing area of research interest and support and now we'll vigorously support those with IT intensive and data intensive demands in their research. And we need to look at how we will look at accelerating the implementation of digital measures, the faculty database that will support generation of dossier's for tenure, CV's, bios and updating web pages. We also need to look hard and, hold your applause for just a second, we need to look hard at a new email system. Now you can applaud.

And I think it's time that we actually move that forward so that we can all have a much simpler time accessing the data that we have. We are also having discussions, I have to kind of joke, it's easier for me to log into my retirement account and manage the money that I have than it is for me to log into almost anything at UNLV. A common portal, one sign in, all services available, is something that we seek. And I know it'll take us a while to get there, but we will continue to push for much easier access for faculty and administrators to all the different data sources, to the student information system, to your benefits, to your email, to your web instructional packages. So that's going to be a commitment that we make as well. We will proceed, as I said before, with integrate two, which will help us improve our business practices. We will, very important investment that we are going to commit to is we will develop a comprehensive faculty mentoring program to better recruit, retain and support faculty, and in particular diverse faculty. We will create an office of economic development. We will begin to implement general education and first year experience plans. We've started and now we need to expand those with IT intensive and data intensive demands in their research. And we need to look at how we will look at accelerating the implementation of digital measures, the faculty database that will support generation of dossier's for tenure, CV's, bios and updating web pages. We also need to look hard and, hold your applause for just a second, we need to look hard at a new email system. Now you can applaud.

Last year, we brought in three national merit scholars. This year we brought in three more national merit scholars. We have about 14 national merit scholars on campus. We'd like to have about 30 or 40 national merit scholars on campus. We need to provide better packages and be more aggressive about building the academic qualifications of our freshmen students as they go in. And as we do that our students who are here and are alumni will see the value of their degrees increase. We need to focus fundraising and philanthropic efforts and supporting our faculty, especially during these lean economic times, and on supporting student scholarships. And I have been spending most of my personal fund raising efforts, through the angel investments that we have we've created quasi endowments that can support approximately 20 faculty. In the not to distant future we're going to make an announcement that will be very significant for one of our colleges in a major naming gift that will support faculty and students. And we have been really working with a number of different foundations and groups for expanding student support, like the kinds of support our Engelstad scholars have right now, which at maturity will support approximately 100 highly qualified and high need students. Those are great students and we want to get as many on our campus as we can. We will begin replacing interim appointments in executive leadership with national searches for highly qualified people to move us forward. We will identify and resolve barriers to student graduation. And I was just at a great meeting with the chairs yesterday in which we talked about many of these, but I want it to be everybody's business to make our students successful, to not throw up roadblocks, but to help them knock down the barriers to their graduation, to find ways to put the classes we need on the table and to make sure that they
And if we could turn up the house lights, I would certainly like to address questions, because I know that you always have questions and are ready to hold my feet to the fire. So please come down. There are microphones to the right and left. And if you have questions, we've got all the expertise we need up here on stage and we'd love to answer them for you. Now I'd be shocked if Mary [inaudible] students weren't at the microphone.

They're on their way.

[ Applause ]

[ Laughter ]

To be clear. But I think the message is powerful and it's time we got it out to the community. And I believe that the time to make a difference for this university is now. The time to influence our legislators so that they understand the value of UNLV is now. And I'm confident with the people in this room and the incredible faculty and staff and student populations of this campus that we will work together. And I ask all of you, rise with us.

Thank you, so much.

[ Applause ]

And if we could turn up the house lights, I would certainly like to address questions, because I know that you always have questions and are ready to hold my feet to the fire. So please come down. There are microphones to the right and left. And if you have questions, we've got all the expertise we need up here on stage and we'd love to answer them for you. Now I'd be shocked if Mary [inaudible] students weren't at the microphone.

They're on their way.
Hello. Fine speech. I just wanted to ask whether or not you believe tuition rates will hold steady or do new, incoming students and returning students face bigger raises.

At this point I'd have to tell you that with the state level of support that we have the only way we can build our campus and offer you all the classes that you need, we know there's critical bottlenecks that we're not serving right now, is for another tuition increase. We hope that it can be reasonable. We hope that I can provide, and others who have raised funds for us, will be able to expand our commitment to providing financial aid and scholarships to you. But I think there's a partnership here. And on our side of the agreement we need to offer you great faculty, access to top quality research experiences, and we need to make sure that critically needed classes are provided and we can't do that without funding. Right now we're at a level. We don't have a lot of room to expand. With an increase in tuition we'll be able to build and grow and give you the experience that you so richly deserve.

Thank you, sir. One more question. You spoke about having a reserve of money for new hires, I was just wondering why is that money being used towards new hires rather than sustaining the faculty and staff that we have before their lost.

Great question, and one that I get at virtually every single faculty meeting. If you took a look at the level of money we have for new hires right now I'll tell you it's a million dollars. I know it sounds like a lot. It isn't much for hires. And that's where we are unless we get a tuition increase. A million dollars would be a rain drop in the desert for trying to restore the cuts and the lost benefits that our faculty are currently facing. Yet, we know that if we can hire a few students in areas where we have been depopulated, and there's a few departments that got hit very hard by the [inaudible] that we'll be able to make sure you have the classes you need and our programs will be able to continue. I think the continuity of programs and our efforts to provide you with high quality degrees has to be our top priority right now. And I think that we're going to need a legislative solution to make sure that we can restore nationally competitive salaries and benefits to our faculty. Having said that I thin it's incumbent on all of us to look very carefully at where modest investments of one time funds can be used to support faculty success, particularly for assistant professors.

Thank you, sir.

Hello, my question is with the increases in tuition, what's going to be the incentive for people to stay in Nevada rather than going to a neighboring state where we'd get a discount on tuition?

Well, the simple answer is because we're still cheaper than they are.

The more compelling answer is that you should select an institution based off it's ability to offer you the degrees and career paths that you seek. We are working hard to build the best degree paths we can for you. And I mean, I'll just take for instance. We attract a huge non residential population. We have students from 50 states and we have students from over 80 countries at UNLV. Most of those students are paying about 18,500 dollars a year to come here. So there's a market. That international marketplace helps to underscore what the value of a UNLV degree is. We know that, for example, students coming out of our college of business are very competitive in getting great jobs, especially in some of the high needs areas like [inaudible] and accounting. We know that students out of our hotel college, the premiere hotel college in the country, are getting great jobs and are moving into leadership positions on the strip. If you look up and down you'll see CEOs in many of the casinos are UNLV graduates or alum. As we approach 100,000 graduates, and that's something to celebrate, as we approach 100,000 graduates, which we'll hit during our December graduation exercise, I would submit to you that a UNLV degree for a residential student is an incredible investment in their future and will pay itself off many fold over their life.

Thank you.

Hi, Neal.

Hi, Lindy.
I'll try and keep my question toned down. You mentioned in your speech that you fought tirelessly to keep many UNLV students money at UNLV and we didn't win that one. It is something I've spoken very loudly about. And if you were to ask me, as a student of UNLV for 13 more percent, I would say you could have your 13 more percent but it needs to stay here. If it's going to go to a general fund and come back at four or five percent, then I'm going to go elsewhere. We are not wasting about economy. We're fighting dearly at one of the toughest times. But as we watch UNLV rise from the problems of the past into a future, I want to hear the president of my university say that he will never stop fighting to keep UNLV dollars at UNLV.

I will tell you that it will certainly be our top legislative priority. And I don't believe I'm putting words in the chancellor or the board of regents mouth when I say that the first step in a fair funding formula is to separate the tuition to allow us to retain and be restored our non residential tuition and to keep the money that we raise here on campus. So you have my pledge to that.

Thank you.

Hi. Good morning. How do you expect that customer services will be improved for students?

We've already made some strides in the four years that we've been here. I want to point to a few different things that we've done. First, we've created an academic success center in which students can get very, very inexpensive tutoring, peer counseling, peer tutoring, as well as advising and some limited career advising. We know we're going to have to rebuild our career advising efforts. And those are all strong supports for our students. We also know that students who visit that center graduate at much higher levels than students who don't. And so we want to make sure that students are aware of this. We've put into place something we call the class concierge, let by Gil Juno, so that when students who are nearing graduation experience some bumps and can't get the critically needed classes that they have to have to graduate in a timely fashion that we knock down the barriers for them. We appeal to instructors and to deans and to associate deans and chairs so that we can place them in the class. We've built a student one stop and you've probably been over there in that student services area, it's right across the path from the academic success center, to try to simplify your ability to engage. And finally, to our new student information system, the integrate system, which has created a new My UNLV portal, we seek to continuously expand online services to students and online counseling and online services that we think will help them to manage their academic careers better. So we're continuously improving things like degree audits and other kinds of things that will allow you to track your progress, make fewer errors and graduate in a timely fashion. I'll tell you I believe that extends to our orientation activities, that extends to our recruiting activities, and that needs to extend to our commitment to you to deliver learning outcomes that will serve you all of your life to help give you a solid and strong career and make your employers proud that they hired you.

Thank you.

Do you foresee a tobacco free policy being implemented on the campus within the next few months here?

Would you, a tobacco?

A tobacco free policy.

Oh, okay. I don't know.

I have been told these are difficult to implement. I've also been told that they're easy to implement. We know there's pros and cons from a mechanical perspective. Certainly from a philosophical perspective we would like to see a tobacco free environment and workplace here on our campus. But I'll tell you you're not talking to the most highly qualified person about this discussion. Several folks in student affairs, our chief business office and others have been discussing it. And I know that nursing and Suzanne have been working hard on this issue. And I am basically awaiting the results of their reports so that we can, I can begin to understand the details of it. So I'm sorry to say I don't know yet, but I don't know yet.

And what would you say to the nearly 6,000 students who consider themselves smokers when they have to go off campus to have a cigarette?
Well, I think that's one of the challenges we face. If you're a faculty member, a student, a staff member who smokes and you actually have to vacate the campus in order to smoke, what does that do to our ability to serve our students, to make sure we're staffed and to support them? On the other hand, how are non smokers impacted by folks who are creating an environment that has smoke in it? Again, there's balanced issues around it and I'll tell you that I don't have a resolution to it at this time. It has been an ongoing topic of conversation. I look to continue the conversation in the dialogue.

Thank you.

Hi. My question is how will creating a more selective process for new freshmen expand education in Nevada overall?

Well, we have a three tiered system of education here and one of the things that we've learned is that when we bring in students who aren't highly qualified for a research university environment that they are challenged because they're not necessarily ready. It requires remediation, which is expensive, and doesn't apply to graduation. And in some cases it is frustration to the students because they're placed into classes in which their chances to succeed are not as good as they should be. So one of the issues that we have to deal with is where, how do you appropriately understand a student's readiness to attend college? And that we need to work out with our K12 partners because we need better information, and we don't have it yet, to be honest. The second thing we need to understand is that we have this three tiered system of education. We have community colleges. We have Nevada State and we have UNLV. And for those who aren't ready for a research university experience, a good start at a community college or a degree from Nevada State is something that everyone can still be proud of and give people a chance to get their legs under them. And then if they choose to they can pursue their degrees here.

Okay. I just have one more question, please. According, I don't really have any numbers, but according to the stories in UNLV Journal, at the beginning of every semester students can hardly get into CSN or other community colleges. So do you think the students who are not accepted at UNLV will have the opportunity to expand their education in the future?

I think a lot of changes are going on in the Nevada system of higher education. I could invite the chancellor up here, but I'm going to try to paraphrase an answer for you.

There's no such thing as a free lunch. Our budget's been severely cut. It's difficult to maintain service levels in the face of the cuts we've received. And if our mission is to build a quality future as opposed to a quantity future, then we have to make sure that we're providing a quality education to our students with the resources we have. Part of the exercise that we are going through now is that in the face of very large reductions of our state face, we are attempting to hold the line around the number of students that we currently have. In fact, we're a little down in enrollment this year and that's partly, I'm sure there's contributing circumstances that are partly because of tuition, partly because of other factors. So if that's true at UNLV, it's true at Nevada State and it's true at CSN. I believe you'll see fairly significant changes in admission policies in all thereof those areas in the near future. And what they'll mean is that the Clark County School District will have to step up to produce more college ready students at a higher level.

I have a question. The athletic department is a key component to the success of the university. So maybe you can explain maybe what's being done with academics to help the success of the academic program, which of course would make the university more successful?

Well I think you saw a lot of those plans roll out today. Let me first just say, wasn't that a great football game against Hawaii Saturday? What, what?

One of the parts of a complete campus experience is the ability to participate as a spectator or as a student athlete in college athletics. I know it builds community, it's family, it creates a family feel. And you've heard me refer to athletics as the front porch. People from the community come in to our athletic events, they look around and maybe if they like us...
\[ \text{they'll come into the rest of the campus and they'll participate. Many of our donors are} \]
\[ \text{drawn into our campus through athletics and then ultimately become very significant donors} \]
\[ \text{who improve the student experience. One of the things that we've learned from athletics is} \]
\[ \text{that if we provide a high touch environment for helping to support our student athletes} \]
\[ \text{academically that they are very, very successful. We know the academic success center, the} \]
\[ \text{general education program we're proposing and first year experiences are an attempt to take} \]
\[ \text{some of the lessons that we've learned from athletics and other areas and extend them to all} \]
\[ \text{of our freshmen population so that they, too, have the same opportunities to succeed. And I} \]
\[ \text{think there's your most potent example of a little bit of crosstalk between what we've} \]
\[ \text{learned in athletics and what we've learned about the main campus and how we're going to try} \]
\[ \text{to infuse those values into support for all of our students.} \]

\[ \text{Thank you.} \]

\[ \text{Okay. I'm hearing that it's about time. So I think we can field one final question and then} \]
\[ \text{I'm going to invite all of you to a very important dedication.} \]

\[ \text{Good morning. You said we were on stable grounds right now with the budget cuts. How long can} \]
\[ \text{we expect to stay on those stable grounds?} \]

\[ \text{I would like to, well, I think anybody who knows me knows I'm hopeful. And I can't live in a} \]
\[ \text{world where I constantly look down. I believe that our budget is stable, that our state base} \]
\[ \text{will be stable. I believe that the efforts of the state to build a diversified economy will,} \]
\[ \text{in fact, help to enrich funding at UNR, UNLV and the Desert Research Institution. And so I} \]
\[ \text{believe we're at rock bottom. I believe that a tuition increment will help us to build and} \]
\[ \text{stabilize further and I don't see, again, and you know, you always have to say short of} \]
\[ \text{utterly unpredictable global issues, and in that case we'll be in a lot of good company with} \]
\[ \text{everyone else and every other higher ed institution in the country. Short of that, I don't} \]
\[ \text{believe you'll see a further erosion or a significant erosion in our funding. So we're} \]
\[ \text{stable, we don't plan to lose anymore faculty or staff, we don't plan to lose anymore} \]
\[ \text{programs or degree programs other than in the ordinary kind of inspection that we give} \]
\[ \text{programs to make sure they're producing. And I am confident that all of us who are here today} \]
\[ \text{to expect the programs that we need and the core programs of this university to persist.} \]

\[ \text{That's good news. Thank you, very much.} \]

\[ \text{You're welcome. Now I thank all of you for your patience. I thank the students for asking} \]
\[ \text{great questions. And I want to now ask all of you to join us for our science and engineering} \]
\[ \text{building dedication. And just a couple of words, part of the great models that we've seen} \]
\[ \text{going forward from different states to produce a more diversified economy has been a} \]
\[ \text{commitment to build research capacity and bringing in faculty who attract new businesses and} \]
\[ \text{high tech companies because of the research that they do and they support that they can give} \]
\[ \text{them. We already have some interactions on our campus like that. We need to grow them. One of} \]
\[ \text{the finest facilities I have ever seen is about to be dedicated. It's the science and} \]
\[ \text{engineering building. It's a building that encourages interdisciplinary research. It's a} \]
\[ \text{building that's built with flexible space so research teams can move into it, adapt to it,} \]
\[ \text{change it with minimum cost and to deliver products in a way that matches grant cycles and} \]
\[ \text{matches their productivity. It is, in short, a tangible symbol of our commitment to building} \]
\[ \text{a strong and robust economy and, I believe, it will become the heartbeat in this state for} \]
\[ \text{economic diversification. And on that great note, I conclude today's address and invite you} \]
\[ \text{to the science and engineering building dedication. Thank you all, so much.} \]

[ Applause ]

[ Silence ]