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Introduction

In September 1957, the first classes were held on the University of Nevada, Las Vegas’ (UNLV) campus in a new 13,000-square-foot building. A year later, the school received accreditation from the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools.

Over the next five decades, UNLV grew at a rapid pace, erecting more than 100 buildings, developing dozens of undergraduate and graduate degree programs, promoting scholarship, creating partnerships with the community, and fielding nationally ranked sports teams. The university also recruited diverse and talented students from across the country, founded an alumni association, and established a fundraising foundation.

Today, UNLV enrolls about 28,000 students and the institution offers over 240 degree and certificate programs through 15 schools and colleges. Governed by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), UNLV is required to have an individual strategic plan, as are the other NSHE institutions. This strategic plan must clearly reflect the overarching goals of the system’s plan while also establishing more specific goals, targets, and directions based on the institution’s overall mission and service area. According to NSHE policy, UNLV and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) shall each offer a wide array of academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as research and public service programs to serve their respective regions, the state, and the nation. System policy further states that each institution shall strive to complement the other through its programs and through cooperative inter-institutional activities (and, when appropriate, with Nevada State College and the Desert Research Institute). The universities are further directed to strive to avoid unnecessary duplication of academic, research, and public service programs.

To place UNLV’s planning activities in a broader context, NSHE’s Master Plan, Appendix 1.1, establishes goals, targets, and philosophical directions for the future of all higher education institutions in Nevada. For example, targets of the plan include increasing persistence and graduation rates and expanding opportunities for faculty to engage in innovative teaching and research.

As part of NSHE’s planning history, the name of the higher education system was changed in May 2005 from the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) to the Nevada System of Higher Education, to more accurately reflect its growth and development.
Institutional Context

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas is one of two state universities in Nevada. It provides traditional and professional academic programs for a diverse student body and encourages innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, learning, and scholarship.

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

In addition to the academic colleges, several other units, including Diversity and Inclusion, Finance and Business, Student Affairs, Research and Graduate Studies, and University Advancement work cooperatively to support the major functions of the university.

The university offers artistic, cultural, and technical resources and opportunities to the community it serves. It promotes research programs and creative activities by students and faculty that respond to the needs of an urban community in a desert environment.

About 20 percent of the population in Las Vegas has college degrees, the second lowest proportion of any major U.S. urban area. Bachelor's and advanced degree production go hand-in-hand with workforce development, business investment, higher wages and lower unemployment, all of which are greatly needed in Nevada. Increasing the college-going and college graduation rates in Nevada is an NSHE priority, one in which UNLV continues to play a major role.

In February 2011 the Nevada State Legislature will begin its regularly scheduled session. The major priority will be to determine how to address the state’s budget shortfall. The outcome of this legislative session will determine if Nevada institutions of higher education must absorb additional budget reductions. The Nevada System of Higher Education continues to work with the Legislature and the community to demonstrate how continued support for Nevada’s institutions of higher education can assist in Nevada’s economic recovery.
Preface

I. Brief Update on Institutional Changes Since the Last Report

Since the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Comprehensive Evaluation in April 2010, UNLV has enacted several changes as a result of budget reductions, which were reported to NWCCU in a letter dated June 10, 2010.

Several academic departments and one academic support unit were approved for elimination by the NSHE Board of Regents effective June 30, 2011, with the exception of the Teaching and Learning Center which closed as of June 30, 2010:

- Department of Marriage and Family Therapy
- Department of Educational Leadership
- Department of Recreation and Sport Management
- Department of Sports Education Leadership
- School of Informatics
- Teaching and Learning Center

Two degree programs were approved for elimination:

- Bachelor of Science with a major in Clinical Laboratory Sciences, effective June 30, 2011
- Bachelor of Science with a major in Urban Horticulture, effective June 30, 2010

UNLV was able to protect tenure for the faculty of the above listed programs and gave students two years to finish their degree in each program.
II. Response to Recommendations/Issues Requested by the Commission

In April 2010, UNLV hosted a team of evaluators from the NWCCU for its Comprehensive Decennial Evaluation. The team’s final report from that visit included seven commendations and two recommendations, Appendix 1.2. The recommendations are shown in the box below. Recommendation One will be addressed in a separate report submitted with this Standard One report. Recommendation Two will be addressed in a separate report which will be submitted to the Commission in May 2011. Both recommendations will be addressed in subsequent reports prepared by UNLV for the NWCCU.

April 2010 Comprehensive Evaluation Recommendations

Recommendation One

The committee notes that since the 2007 focused interim evaluation visit, significant but uneven progress has been made across the University with respect to educational assessment. However, in order to ensure that gathered data truly lead to appropriate course and program renewal, it is recommended that such additional steps be taken to assign responsibility for implementation at the appropriate administrative level (for example, the deans of the schools and colleges) as will lead to full implementation of, and accountability for, the University's policies on student learning assessment (Standard 2.B and Policy 2.2).

Recommendation Two

The committee notes the University's stated intention of becoming a "Very High Research" institution and that this goal is consistent with UNLV's mission and strategic priorities. At the same time, the committee observes that budget reductions and attendant program and services adjustments have resulted in a serious decline in support services to faculty seeking or administering extramural funding. This, combined with increased teaching loads (as a result of further budget restrictions), appears to compromise the realization of this priority. The committee therefore recommends that the University ensure that policies, structures, and resources adequate to meet the needs of such research programs and activities are deemed to be consistent with and extensions of the University's distinctive mission, a mission so critical to the economic and cultural environment of Nevada (Standard 7.B.5).
III. **Date of Most Recent Review of Mission and Core Themes**

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas’ current mission statement was approved by the NSHE Board of Regents in August 2008. This new mission statement was the result of a year-long planning process that began in Fall 2007, concluded in Spring 2008 and involved students, faculty, and staff. The mission statement was developed as a component of the institutional strategic plan entitled, *Focus: 50 to 100 – Celebrating 50 Years and Planning the Future*, Appendix 1.3, which was also approved by the Board of Regents in August 2008. The mission statements of all NSHE institutions were most recently reviewed at the April 2009 NSHE Board of Regents meeting.

In August 2010, the university formed a Standard One Committee to review its strategic planning documents and based on the mission statement, generate draft core themes. The Standard One Committee consists of the following members:

- Dave James, Co-chair, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Programs
- Gail Griffin, Co-chair, Academic Affairs Analyst
- Kari Coburn, Assistant Vice Provost Institutional Analysis & Planning
- Sue DiBella, Research & Graduate Studies Director of Communication
- Angelina Hill, Associate Director of Academic Assessment
- Jo-Anne Lancellotti, Executive Program Manager, Office of Information Technology
- Kathy Robins, Associate Professor, Chemistry
- Karen Strong, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
- Tish Smyer, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs, Nursing

Throughout the fall semester, the committee conducted many open meetings, including town halls and targeted group meetings, to engage the campus community in discussion of the proposed core themes and objectives. The committee also worked with the strategic planning implementation teams that periodically update the education, research, and infrastructure priorities and report on accomplishments. The most recent updates are available in Appendices 1.4-6.

The final core themes that emerged from the interactions with the groups are:

- **Promote Student Learning and Success**
• Advance and Support Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

• Foster Inclusion and Community Engagement

The core themes and objectives are presented more fully in the following sections.
Chapter One – Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

1.A Mission

UNLV’s current mission statement was approved by the NSHE Board of Regents in August 2008. This new mission statement was the result of a year-long planning process that began in Fall 2007, concluded in Spring 2008 and involved students, faculty, and staff. The statement was developed as a component of the institutional strategic plan entitled, Focus: 50 to 100 – Celebrating 50 Years and Planning the Future, which was also approved by the Board of Regents at the August 2008 meeting. The mission statements of all NSHE institutions were most recently reviewed at the April 2009 Board of Regents meeting. The UNLV Mission Statement is shown below.

**UNLV Mission Statement**

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas is a research institution committed to rigorous educational programs and the highest standards of a liberal education. We produce accomplished graduates who are well prepared to enter the work force or to continue their education in graduate and professional programs. Our faculty, students, and staff enthusiastically confront the challenges of economic and cultural diversification, urban growth, social justice, and sustainability. Our commitment to our dynamic region and State centrally influences our research and educational programs, which improves our local communities. Our commitment to the national and international communities ensures that our research and educational programs engage both traditional and innovative areas of study and global concerns. UNLV’s distinctive identity and values permeate a unique institution that brings the best of the world to our region and, in turn, produces knowledge to improve the region and world around us.

UNLV is committed to and driven by these shared values that will guide our decision making:

- High expectations for student learning and success;
- Discovery through research, scholarship, and creative activity;
- Nurturing equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment;
- Social, environmental, and economic sustainability;
- Strong, reciprocal, and interdependent relationships between UNLV and the region around us;
- An entrepreneurial, innovative, and unconventional spirit.
UNLV’s mission statement was widely disseminated on the campus and highlighted on the home page of the university’s website.

When an academic program at UNLV undergoes a program review, it is asked to explain how its mission supports and facilitates fulfillment of the university’s mission statement. This process allows regular review of program, department and college mission statements and ensures they are appropriately focused.

1.A.2. The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

The core themes of UNLV, the objectives, and their indicators of achievement express the mission of the university. The core themes describe in broad statements what UNLV plans to accomplish and reflect the values that are shared by faculty and staff. Evaluation of the metrics associated with the indicators of achievement will demonstrate how effectively UNLV is carrying out its mission.
1.B Core Themes

1.B.1. The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.

UNLV has identified three core themes that manifest essential elements of the mission statement and encompass the mission. These core themes are:

- Promote Student Learning and Success
- Advance and Support Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
- Foster Inclusion and Community Engagement

Each core theme is presented individually below.

Core Theme 1: Promote Student Learning and Success

UNLV’s mission statement highlights student success in the first sentence and it is the foundation of the mission: “The University of Nevada, Las Vegas is a research institution committed to rigorous educational programs and the highest standards of a liberal education.” Thus, Promote Student Learning and Success emerged as the logical first core theme.

Institutional performance relative to this core theme is indicated by student retention and graduation rate data, which show UNLV’s rates are generally below the medians for its peer public institutions. There are some programs that meet or exceed the university’s graduation rate goal of 55%; however, the institution as a whole seeks to improve both student retention and graduation rates. Equally important, increases in the numbers of college graduates are needed to build the local workforce, promote private-sector investment in the area, and diversify the Nevada economy.

Core Theme 2: Advance and Support Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

The UNLV mission statement clearly identifies the university as a research institution and describes the institution’s commitment to research that will benefit the region, state, and local communities via the statement: “Our commitment to our dynamic region and State centrally influence our research and educational programs, which improve our local communities.” Thus, Advance and Support Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity emerged as the second core theme.

Research productivity attracts business to the community; businesses are interested in both the intellectual property associated with research and the highly skilled workforce associated with research universities. Strong research also creates a knowledge base
that can improve the quality of life and inform policy-making. In the next four years, UNLV plans to focus its efforts on team-driven research that addresses community, statewide, and regional issues (Appendix 1.7). UNLV has made it a priority to allocate resources to establish research capabilities that will address social, economic, and environmental sustainability issues throughout the region.

**Core Theme 3: Foster Inclusion and Community Engagement**

Three of the values in UNLV’s mission statement provided clear direction for UNLV’s third core theme of *Foster Inclusion and Community Engagement*:

- Nurturing equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment
- Social, environmental, and economic sustainability
- Strong, reciprocal, and interdependent relationships between UNLV and the region around us.

These values are primarily driven by the need to improve the quality of life in Nevada and to meet the changing needs of its citizens. Nevada is a state with strong population growth, increasing racial and ethnic diversity, and a tax base that is inadequate to support the state’s growing needs for sustainable social services. Diversity and inclusion initiatives are needed on campus and in the community to equitably engage the state’s population. In addition to enhancing diversity and inclusion on the campus with students, faculty, and staff, UNLV strives to engage the local community in the effort. Numerous activities are held throughout the year, such as the Festival of Communities, an event that showcases the institution via cultural events, academic research, fine arts presentations, and community service.

Education and research are needed to support the planning and operation of systems that will provide training and care for the region’s population and also provide a healthy living environment through sustainable business and government practices. UNLV endeavors to be engaged with business and government to participate fully in the ongoing transformation of Nevada.
1.B.2. The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.

Each core theme is presented individually below along with its objectives, indicators of achievement, and rationales as to why the indicators are meaningful and assessable measures of achievement of the objectives.

**Core Theme 1: Promote Student Learning and Success**

The Standard One Committee established objectives in concert with the strategic planning documents and their updates (Appendices 1.4-6), the public campus meetings, and direction from the NSHE Chancellor (Appendix 1.8) in order to track progress toward fulfillment of the part of the university’s mission statement described by this core theme. A narrative rationale follows each objective and its associated indicators.

**Objective 1: Recruit, retain, and graduate an engaged and diverse student body.**

**Indicators of Achievement:**

a. Academic preparation

b. Recruitment and enrollment

c. Alignment of campus resources to support retention/persistence and graduation

d. Post-graduation education and employment

Recruitment and enrollment of students with adequate academic preparation is an essential first step toward promoting a student body that is capable of completing a higher education degree. While the institution expects to see growth in knowledge and skill throughout students’ academic careers, certain prerequisite knowledge is necessary for success.

Enrollment of a diverse student body promotes educational growth and intellectual flexibility by allowing students to interact with and learn from peers with differing perspectives in an inclusive environment. Recruitment efforts geared toward increasing student diversity demonstrate the value that the institution places on a diverse student body through promotion of equal access to prospective students.

Adequate levels of support from academic and student services are necessary to promote student persistence and graduation. Student success improves when students receive support specific to their needs throughout their academic career. Alignment of
campus resources to support inclusion, persistence, and graduation indicates levels of support afforded to students. Post-graduate education enrollment rates indicate that UNLV has equipped its graduates with the ability to continuously build skills and knowledge in ways that enhance their lives and careers.

Objective 2: Provide a high quality teaching and learning experience.

Indicators of Achievement:

a. Student academic performance
b. Student satisfaction with major academic areas, quality of instruction, academic support, and institutional resources
c. Faculty involvement and satisfaction with the teaching and learning environment
d. Student involvement in research, creative activities, and co-curricular activities

The academic performance of students provides direct evidence of the quality of the teaching and learning experience. Institutional support for development and improvement of teaching and learning raises quality and improves students’ academic performance.

The level of satisfaction students have with their major academic area reflects the quality of the teaching they receive. Student satisfaction with academic support and institutional resources indicates a supportive learning environment. The quality of interactions that students have with the academic faculty, in addition to the academic support they receive, is vital to students’ perceived and demonstrated success.

Faculty satisfaction with the teaching and learning environment indicates that faculty are supported in providing a high quality teaching and learning experience. Faculty who are engaged in the teaching and learning environment and participate in faculty development activities provide evidence of the faculty’s interest in and willingness to advance the quality of the learning environment.

Student involvement in research and other creative and co-curricular activities provides evidence of the quality of the teaching and learning experience because these activities provide unique, high-impact experiences that have been demonstrated to improve learning. Student involvement in such activities also provides information relevant to potential career options.
Objective 3: Advance graduate education to promote student learning and achievement.

**Indicators of Achievement:**

a. Academic and professional success of graduate students

b. Levels of graduate student support

The academic success of graduate students indicates that both the educational and research missions of the institution are being addressed. Academic contributions made by graduate students typically advance the research agenda of the institution while also preparing students for advanced study or career opportunities. Timely degree completion, student engagement in research activities, and student involvement in publication and grant proposal preparation are all indicators of graduate student success.

The levels of support provided to graduate students serve as critical indicators of institutional commitment to graduate education. Graduate student support is further addressed in Core Theme 2, Objective 2, *Encourage student research, creative, and professional practice activities.*
Core Theme 2: Advance and Support Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

The Standard One Committee established objectives in concert with the strategic planning documents and their updates (Appendices 1.4-6), the public campus meetings, and direction from the NSHE Chancellor (Appendix 1.8) in order to track progress toward fulfillment of the part of the university’s mission statement described by this core theme. A narrative rationale follows each objective and its associated indicators.

Objective 1: Cultivate quality and productivity of research, scholarship, and creative activity.

Indicators of Achievement:

a. Quality and quantity of publications and creative activities

b. Quality and quantity of grants, contracts, patents, and licenses

c. Levels of support for faculty and staff

The quality and quantity of publications, extramural funding, and creative activities are the primary forms of university scholarship that demonstrate faculty commitment to a research agenda. These academic achievements are considered the “gold standard” for demonstrating faculty success in this core theme.

Additionally, the quality and quantity of contracts, patents, and licenses indicate research success in specific disciplines, including science and engineering. Research grant expenditure data (and faculty publication data) are the yardsticks by which research success is measured in certain disciplines. Competitive awards in particular are indications of research success, and funding from prestigious agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), are an indication of quality research. Successful patent and licensing outcomes indicate partnerships with private industry and signify an institution’s support of applied research and its pursuit of additional revenue streams to support research.

Satisfactory levels of support for faculty and staff are necessary to ensure research and scholarship success. Funding for laboratory start-up, first-year grant development, summer salary, travel, other resources and staff demonstrate an institution’s provision of building blocks necessary for faculty research achievement. Teaching load reductions, particularly while faculty are pursuing tenure, also demonstrate support of research and scholarly activity.
Objective 2: Encourage student research, creative, and professional practice activities.

**Indicators of Achievement:**
- Support research opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students
- Multidisciplinary, integrative collaborations in graduate education
- Mentoring and professional development of graduate students

The academic success of graduate students serves to indicate that both the research and educational missions of the institution are being addressed. Graduate student academic success typically advances the research agenda and the reputation of a university while preparing the student for advanced study or career opportunities. Timely completion of degree, student engagement in research activities, and student involvement in publication and grant proposal preparation are all strong indicators of graduate student academic success. Undergraduate student involvement in research indicates institutional interest in embedding research and creative activity in all levels of the learning experience.

Levels of graduate student support serve as perhaps the most critical indicators of institutional commitment to graduate education. University research is dependent upon the recruitment and retention of highly qualified graduate students. Thus, adequate levels of graduate student support are essential to a university’s stated research mission. This support may take the form of competitive graduate assistantship packages, including stipends and tuition and health care benefits; excellent faculty mentoring; professional development opportunities; and adequate staffing to assist students and to handle administrative processes.

Levels of graduate student satisfaction provide an indication of institutional success in supporting graduate education through the variables mentioned above. Graduate student satisfaction with such activities offers feedback on how effectively all of these services are provided.

Objective 3: Enhance the infrastructure and business practices that support research, scholarship, and creative activity in all pertinent units of the institution.

**Indicators of Achievement:**
- Availability and access to support staff and facilities
- Quality and quantity of space and equipment
- Technology, electronic initiatives, and information resources

Availability and access to appropriate administrative structures, support staff, and
facilities demonstrate that the institution provides adequate human resources and physical infrastructure to enable faculty and graduate students to conduct research effectively. Departmental staff, as well as staff in virtually all administrative units across campus, are integral to the support of the research endeavor. Faculty must have appropriate spaces and equipment to meet their scholarly and research goals, therefore providing adequate buildings and other facilities also demonstrates institutional commitment to research.

Quality and quantity of space and equipment is an essential component of institutional research support. Faculty must have adequate office space, and in certain disciplines they must also have adequate laboratory or studio facilities in order to be productive. Equipment needs vary depending upon the nature of the scholarship/creative activity, but many programs, particularly in the colleges of Sciences, Health Sciences, and Engineering, have costly instrumentation needs and equipment maintenance, including maintenance contracts. All of these variables facilitate research productivity.

Technology, electronic initiatives, and information resources contribute significantly to a research agenda. Timely, streamlined administrative and business processes, conducted electronically when possible, provide convenience to faculty and enable them to focus on research/creative activity rather than administrative tasks. Timely access to appropriate electronic library resources is essential to nearly every university discipline. High-end computing resources, including both hardware and software, supported by highly-trained personnel, are essential to research needs across virtually all disciplines. These resources indicate institutional support for research.
Core Theme 3: Foster Inclusion and Community Engagement

The Standard One Committee established objectives in concert with the strategic planning documents and their updates (Appendices 1.4-6), the public campus meetings, and direction from the NSHE Chancellor (Appendix 1.8) in order to track progress toward fulfillment of the part of the university’s mission statement described by this core theme. A narrative rationale follows each objective and its associated indicators.

Objective 1: Foster an inclusive environment that values and encourages tolerance and respect.

Indicators of Achievement:

a. Efforts that ensure a civil and respectful learning and working environment

b. Support for learning about inclusion through both curricular and co-curricular activities

Efforts that ensure a civil and respectful learning and working environment create a culture of inclusion that contributes to a rich learning experience and helps prepare students for engagement in the global society and workplace.

Co-curricular learning and living experiences enrich and reinforce academic learning as well as foster social, physical, and spiritual development. Living and learning in the community and interacting with people holding diverse perspectives teach the values of work, respect, and service.

Annual surveys of student satisfaction and engagement are important indicators because they provide timely and normed data regarding how students perceive the quality of their total college experience.

Objective 2: Promote scholarship that advances community partnerships and economic diversification.

Indicators of Achievement:

a. Community collaborations that address regional economic vitality, environmental stewardship, social well-being, and cultural understanding

b. Institutional support of and participation in partnerships with industry, government, and other entities

Individuals who engage in both effective collaboration as well as independent exploration are enriched not only in the academic and professional fields but also in their citizenship as self-aware contributors to the community. UNLV is focusing its efforts on team-driven research that addresses community, state and regional issues.
such as water resources, public health, urban growth, social well-being, transportation, and renewable energy. The university is committed to supporting innovative research that translates into economic development for the state of Nevada. Employer/industry partnerships are a key indicator of UNLV’s responsiveness to local needs. Partnerships develop solutions to local problems and bring together resources to accomplish goals that could not be reached independently.

**Objective 3: Cultivate a university community that promotes awareness of a diverse and changing world.**

**Indicators of Achievement:**

a. Global partnerships

b. Campus and community engagement on evolving local, national, and global issues

Opportunities for activities such as study abroad for students and international teaching and research for faculty are important parts of the university experience. These activities help students, faculty, and staff understand global politics, international economics, and planetary environmental preservation efforts, all of which can help shape the future. International education and foreign language skills are becoming increasingly important in many careers, both domestic and international. Living in a foreign country provides individuals with opportunities to see our culture, others, and ourselves from a new perspective.

Special campus events, such as the Barrick Lecture Series’ January 2011 discussion "Post-Midterm America: Where do we go from here" with former Florida Governor Jeb Bush and political strategist James Carville, encourage community involvement in multiple ways. Public lectures, discussions, and performances on contemporary issues serve as indicators of campus and community engagement. These events facilitate the expansion of the intellectual community by offering opportunities for community members to join the dialogue on a wide variety of subjects.
Conclusion

During development of the Standard One Self-Evaluation Report, UNLV had the opportunity to revisit its Focus 50 to100 Strategic Plan, evaluate its accomplishments since the plan was adopted, and revise the plan’s priorities. In December 2010, the President’s Office convened its three implementation teams, one each for education, research, and infrastructure, to review the strategic plan within the context of the NWCCU Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations.

Review of the Focus 50 to100 strategic priorities brought to light a number of significant accomplishments in the two and a half years since the plan was approved. The December 2010 review also provided an opportunity for the teams to determine which priorities and objectives need to be scaled back or eliminated as result of state budget cuts that have occurred since the plan approval. As a result, strategic plan priorities and objectives that were either attained, or are no longer feasible, were removed from the revised documents.

The teams distributed the strategic plan’s revised priorities under each core theme, and created documents that show how the plan priorities can support the core themes. Subsequent reviews of the strategic plan will be based upon these “tune up” documents. It became apparent during this review process that, because of rapidly changing economic conditions, UNLV needs to evaluate its strategic priorities on a regular, perhaps annual, schedule.

As stated earlier in this report, the Nevada State Legislature will begin its regularly scheduled biennial session in February 2011. Its major priority will be to determine how to handle the state’s budget shortfall, currently estimated to be about one third of total spending. Nevada’s newly elected governor has proposed a budget that includes significant additional cuts to the higher education budget. If the state budget cuts are supported and passed by the legislature, the Nevada System of Higher Education will then determine how those cuts will be distributed. The cuts are of sufficient magnitude that all NSHE institutions will be severely affected.

NSHE and UNLV continue to work with the citizens of Nevada and the Legislature to demonstrate how investment in Nevada’s institutions of higher education can assist in Nevada’s economic recovery. UNLV is working to ensure there is public confidence that UNLV is meeting its goals, fulfilling its mission, and monitors and assesses itself continuously. The proposed NWCCU Standard One core themes, once adopted, will make this easier to present to the public in the future.

UNLV looks forward to receiving NWCCU’s feedback on this report and to expanding the report to incorporate resource allocation, planning and performance of its institutional systems as it addresses the subsequent standards.