



June 19, 2008

To: Chancellor Jim Rogers

From: Neal J. Smatresk
Executive Vice President and Provost

Re: Impact of Cuts on Academic Programs at UNLV

In the past decade UNLV has grown faster than any major university. This rapid growth has outpaced UNLV's ability to hire faculty and to satisfy student demand. UNLV HAS APPROXIMATELY 950 TENURED OR TENURE TRACK FACULTY, WHICH IS LOW FOR AN INSTITUTION TEACHING NEARLY 28,000 STUDENTS. Because of inadequate state funding that is approximately 15% lower than it is for comparable universities, UNLV had to "fill the gap" in its delivery systems by hiring many part time instructors (PTIs). LAST YEAR UNLV HIRED APPROXIMATELY 900 PTIS FOR EACH OF THE TWO SEMESTERS. EACH INSTRUCTOR TAUGHT BETWEEN 1 AND 4 COURSES. UNLV's instructors and visiting faculty teach about 35% of the 10,500 classes UNLV offers during the fall and spring semesters. When budget cuts hit and required immediate response, the first line of cuts was made by terminating PTIs, and by not replacing faculty who had left or retired.

The 4.5% state mandated budget cuts for 2007/2008 came to UNLV in two parts. For 2008, because the school year was half completed when the cuts were required, UNLV made relatively modest academic cuts (about \$500,000), with non-academic programs assuming much of the fiscal burden. Because the cuts came late in the year, UNLV had to cover those cuts by reducing its spring class offerings taught by PTIs, by about 13%. The remainder of the 4.5% cuts was targeted for the second year of the biennium, with a \$3,000,000 reduction. The second year's cuts, coupled with shortfalls in salary savings, resulted in a reduction of 40 tenure track faculty replacement hires and a 20% REDUCTION IN CLASSES TAUGHT BY PTIS. EVEN THE IMPACT OF THE 4.5% BIENNIAL CUTS GOING INTO THE 2008/2009 YEAR IS A DAGGER IN UNLV'S HEART. THE BUDGET CUTS WILL CAUSE A LOSS OF APPROXIMATELY 650 CLASS SECTIONS – NEARLY 6% OF THE 10,500 CLASSES UNLV OFFERS EVERY YEAR. IF THE UNLV FACULTY HAD NOT PICKED UP PART OF THE EXTRA BURDEN, UNLV WOULD HAVE HAD ALMOST 20,000 FEWER SEATS FOR THIS YEAR. THERE WOULD ALSO BE A LOSS OF NEARLY 2,000 FULL TIME STUDENTS (FTE). UNLV does not want to permanently injure its students. Therefore the UNLV administration asked remaining faculty to assume greater teaching loads for 2008/2009. UNLV was able to cover some of the dramatic losses by using contributions from discretionary funding (from summer programs and continuing education,) by increasing the size of classes and by increasing faculty load.

Despite these efforts, UNLV will have to turn away students from some high demand classes in the fall of 2008 when these reductions take effect. UNLV has no reserve to fund additional sections.

UNLV remains committed to offering its students a world class education, but its ability to deliver the dream is in serious jeopardy – the initial 4.5% cut was a nightmare in and of itself! **THE IMPACT OF A 14% CUT ON UNLV'S PROGRAMS IS FATAL.** A 14% cut represents a loss of \$30,000,000 annually. About 15 million dollars would be absorbed by operations and the remaining \$15,000,000 would come from the academic budget. The loss of "operating funds" would result in the loss of hundreds of support staff, major reductions of services, and deep cuts to UNLV's infrastructure and facilities maintenance. **A \$15,000,000 CUT TO UNLV'S ACADEMIC PROGRAMS WOULD COMPLETELY ELIMINATE UNLV'S PART TIME EDUCATION BUDGET AND ALL OF UNLV'S PART TIME FACULTY. AT LEAST 100 FULL TIME FACULTY WOULD BE LOST. THE TOTAL IMPACT OF THESE CUTS WOULD REDUCE THE NUMBER OF SECTIONS UNLV COULD TEACH BY OVER 3,000 CLASSES. THE TOTAL IMPACT OF THE 4.5% CUTS ALREADY TAKEN AND THE PROJECTED 14% CUTS WOULD ELIMINATE 40% OF UNLV'S TOTAL CLASS OFFERINGS. UNLV WOULD LOSE 8,000 TO 10,000 STUDENTS.** Losing this many students would cause a further spiraling downward as UNLV would lose more than \$34 million dollars in annual student fees, which would in effect increase the proposed \$60.6 million dollar biennial budget cut to nearly \$130 million dollars. The subsequent losses of classes, and the resulting loss of students would begin a "death spiral" of declining services and funding that could never be reversed. Along the way UNLV's research programs would cease, staff and faculty would leave and UNLV's graduate program would decline by at least 50%.

UNLV will never recover from the injuries that will be suffered, and the emerging excellent reputation UNLV has worked so hard to achieve will be lost. There would be a drastic loss of workforce in Southern Nevada. **GREAT CITIES NEED GREAT UNIVERSITIES AND EVERY GREAT CITY HAS A GREAT UNIVERSITY.** Nevada cannot expand and diversify its economy without a potent research institution as its intellectual backbone.

cc: David B. Ashley, President