

UNLV Tier 1 Initiative Budget Narrative

prepared for presentation to NSHE Board of Regents June 2014

The key state budgetary component of the UNLV Tier 1 Initiative is a **multi-year plan to restore, in graduated steps, the \$60 million of UNLV's general fund allocation to operating budget that was cut between 2008 and 2013**. We are proposing this investment as an enhancement above the funds allocated through the current parameters of the NSHE funding formula, which is largely driven by instruction rather than research and innovation. This budget proposal is for expenses above current operations plus anticipated increases associated with salary, merit pay, and fringe benefit costs.

1. Those funds would be deployed over **8 to 10 years** as follows (see attached table):
 - a. **250 new instructional faculty hires (48 senior faculty and 202 junior faculty) in research-intensive areas tied to state economic development imperatives**. These "Tier 1 hires" will parallel current and projected plans to enhance instructional staffing to meet student needs in support of current student Retention, Progression and Completion initiative.

Taken together, the Tier 1 and R/P/C initiatives would grow our total **full-time, instructional faculty to 1200 positions**, a target based upon comparison of the faculty/ student and faculty/ research expenditure ratios of comparably sized public universities with Carnegie Research University/ Very High designation.¹ Of these 1200 positions, our plan is for **950 tenure-track/ tenured faculty positions** and **275 non-tenure-track/ instruction-intensive faculty positions**. Under this plan, we intend to **reduce our part-time headcount below 20% of total instructional staff** (including Graduate Assistants)² and **reduce the share of instruction taught by part-time instructors to less than 20% of student credit hours**.

- b. **88 academic support staff positions**, one for every three new faculty positions created.³
- c. **260 new graduate teaching assistantships** (ie scholarships) and enhancement of the base stipends paid to those graduate assistants.

¹ UNLV White Paper, "Faculty Size and Carnegie Rankings," February 2013. Note that as per IPEDS definitions, "instructional faculty" excludes library faculty, faculty deployed in full-time administrative positions and faculty wholly devoted to research and public service.

² AAUP *The Employment Status of Instructional Staff Members in Higher Education (2014)* reports the national average for part-time instructors as a share of total instructional staff (including graduate teaching assistants) at public research universities is 19.2%.

³ 3:1 ratio is based upon findings of an academic paper on the "optimal" ratio at a research university, (Martin and Hill, "Baumol and Bowen Cost Effects in Research Universities," Social Science Research Network October 2013) as reported in *Chronicle of Higher Education* (November 1, 2012) and from a CUPA-HR publication, *You Can Get There from Here: A Guide to Downsizing in Higher Education* (2008, 2nd ed., p. 44, which identified this ratio as "realistic" for science-intensive institutions.

2. These faculty, staff and student scholarships will be allocated through a collaborative planning process led by the Provost and involving Research/Economic Development office, Deans and leading faculty researchers (CoRE Fellows,⁴ Brookings Scholars, Research Council, etc). It is anticipated a large number of these positions would be interdisciplinary appointments across our existing colleges in innovative areas.
 - a. This planning process will make data-driven determinations of research fields which would have the greatest impact on our ability to **attain our identified Carnegie Tier 1 performance targets in research activity and doctoral degree productivity**. (See Attached table).
 - b. Beyond merely attaining Carnegie Tier 1 status, these areas would be identified as those most likely to support **Economic Development priorities in state and regional plans**.

3. The legislative mechanism we propose is a **“Nevada Tier 1 bill”** to enhance faculty size and graduate student scholarships at qualifying public research universities. The bill would establish, under oversight authority created by the state legislature and the Board of Regents, academic and research standards for designation as a research university and then a procedure for institutions to set and be reviewed for meeting performance benchmarks. Meeting these benchmarks would be the condition for renewed or expanded Tier 1 funding in each year or biennium of the program.
 - a. One model for such a bill would be the Texas “Tier 1 Bill” of 2009 *“to provide funding to research universities and emerging research universities for the recruitment and retention of highly qualified faculty and the enhancement of research productivity at those universities; to assist eligible institutions in leveraging private gifts for the enhancement of research productivity and faculty recruitment; to provide a dedicated, independent, and equitable source of funding to enable emerging research universities in this state to achieve national prominence as major research universities”*.
 - b. Another model would be the Florida “Pre-eminence bill” of 2013, which *“establishes academic & research standards for a university to be designated preeminent state research university” through a “collaborative partnership of state legislature “ and the Board of Regents.*

4. UNLV recommends for the allocation should be **a separate allocation within the NHSE budget**, either:
 - i. **a designated appropriation for research universities** (as Texas and Florida have done through special legislation for this purpose.) In this approach, an oversight board of Regents, state legislators and community leaders would approve data-based case-load metrics (i.e. projected faculty size, research support staff size, post-doc and graduate student enrollments) and then annual performance benchmarks (graduate degrees conferred and research awards or expenditures) which we would set and have to meet for the funding to be reauthorized.
 - ii. **and/or an appropriation through each research university Statewide Programs budget for Economic Development affiliated academic activities.**

⁴ Faculty workshops under the auspices of the UNLV Collaborative Research and Education initiative (CoRE) identified seven areas in which collaborative teams are developing research projects tied to Economic Development priorities: Sustainable Materials/ Renewable Resources; Emergent Learning Technologies; Health Sciences and Delivery; Gaming Innovation and Regulation; Information Technology and Data Security; Culture, Media and Arts.

- iii. **We do not advocate funding this through Knowledge Fund** because as currently constituted, the Knowledge Fund does not provide resources for the institution to develop base capacity; i.e. faculty positions cannot be filled based on one-time funds. However, Tier 1 funds should be aligned with Knowledge Fund initiatives to provide state funding for faculty lines in areas of research that originate from Knowledge Fund awards.
 - a. **We do not propose to use revenue enhancements from student tuition and fees to support this initiative.** We have earmarked those funds to support existing institutional priorities, notably to meet current and anticipated needs for student access (i.e., financial aid), for student support (advisors, academic coaches, student customer service staff), for student needs in instructional technology, and for identified instructional staffing needs for current and anticipated future enrollment in support of our Retention, Progression and Completion initiative.

- 5. UNLV has **significant capital needs** associated with its Tier 1 plan. Accordingly, we are aligning our recently completed Campus Master Plan for capital improvement projects with this academic and research plan. We have developed **a plan that combines refurbishment projects of existing structures, planning and site preparation for new structures, and construction of new structures** to facilitate this needed increase of campus gross square footage and **to allocate that space to fulfill the office, instructional and research / creative space needs associated with the Tier 1 initiative.** Our 15-year capital budget (attached) consists of :
 - a. **state capital funds (\$182 million)**
 - b. **funds from the community (\$121 million)**
 - c. **internal funds, including indirect cost recovery from grants (\$10 million)**
 - d. **to support an enhancement to the campus of more than 500, 000 gross square feet.**
 - e. **and repurposing 200,000 gross square feet** to support Tier 1 research and instruction.

- 6. UNLV would provide **over \$100 million from current and anticipated institutional funds** for **necessary enhancements of research infrastructure to support these anticipated new hires.**
 - a. We anticipate **\$61 million in one-time costs associated with research start-up packages for newly hired faculty.**
 - b. We anticipate **an additional \$40 million over 10 years to support research infrastructure (library resources, laboratory renovation, instrumentation, technical support staff).**
 - c. We plan to fund these needs from **accrued and anticipated indirect cost recovery from external grants and contracts** and from **existing and anticipated one-time funds.**