

Students work with wildlife

by La Rae Bringhurst

The National Park Service Cooperative Unit at UNLV celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The unit works with the National Park Service to study wildlife in national parks. It is the second of its kind in the nation.

The UNLV unit currently serves the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Great Basin National Park, and Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Monuments. The cooperative has also worked on projects in the Grand Canyon and Zion National Parks.

The service was established in the early 1970's as a cost-effective means of providing research to national parks that, because of their small size, could not afford to hire their own full time scientists.

Charles Douglas, a biology professor and the head of the cooperative unit for 19 of its 20 years, said the arrangement helps the university as well as the park service.

"Combining our resources has proved to be a tremendous asset," said Douglas. "The park service receives much-needed research support, while UNLV students get the experience of working on a wide range of scientific projects."

Professor Jim Deacon, head of environmental studies, said the unit provides opportunities for our students, particularly our graduate students, to work on projects important to our national parks.

Jef Jaeger, a student involved with the project, has had extensive experience working with the Desert Big Horn Sheep. His duties include counting the sheep to estimate the herd's population and checking their movement patterns.

The cooperative is currently working on a project studying the impact a new bridge across the Colorado River below Hoover Dam would have on the Bighorn Sheep.

Master plan plots direction for growth and well being

by Rick Nielsen

Imagine your job is to coordinate all of the academic programs for the growing enrollment at UNLV, while at the same time keeping an eye on their needs and goals of the future.

Then imagine that UNLV is just one of seven institutions within the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) you are responsible for all of which need to work together.

Someone does have such a job—the Academic Master Plan Committee. The committee, made up of 13 members of university faculty, staff, and one student representative, is expected to plan for the greater good of the university as well as keeping the whole system in mind.

The process of doing just that started nine months ago when each of the seven institutions in the UCCSN were required to submit a mission statement to the Board of Regents Committee for Academic Affairs.

The seven institutions include UNR, UNLV, four community colleges, and the Desert Research Institute.

One member of the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), Regent Shelly Berkley, defined

a mission statement as a definition of who and what the individual schools are and what their goals are educationally.

Berkley said the mission statement is, "a way to analyze how each school fits into the bigger picture. With more and more students and less and less budget, the best way to overcome any problems is to plan."

Vice Chancellor for the AAC, John Richardson, has acknowledged that the board has received and approved all the mission statements, and is currently awaiting the completion and submittal of the respective master plans.

"The academic master plan is an in-depth and detailed blueprint that potentially affects both present and future programs," Richardson said. "It spells out the areas the university hopes to strengthen and the direction it's moving. The academic master plan is the basis for planning new buildings, faculty and equipment."

Senior Vice President and Provost, John Unrue, chair of the Academic Master Plan Committee expects the master plan to be completed by the end of October. Six new programs have been put aside pending the completion and approval of UNLV's master plan.

"My hope is once we get our plan in we would be permitted to move forward on the programs that have been approved by our campus and the UCCSN," Unrue said.

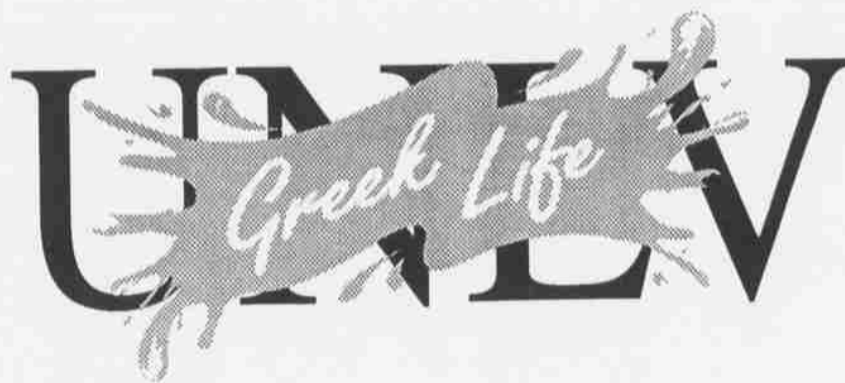
He added that the mission of the university is to continue to develop the academic excellence that will serve the best interest of the students and continue to enhance the academic reputation of UNLV on a national and international level.

"Our growth at UNLV dictates the need for planning and a master plan," Unrue said. "Because of increased enrollment we have continued to focus on excellent teaching, research and new program development. This has improved our quality as a university and made us more attractive and desirable, which in turn has continued to increase our enrollment."

Unrue also stressed the fact that although the master plan is an in-depth and complicated process, to efficiently address the ever changing needs of a young institution such as UNLV, a certain amount of flexibility must be allowed.

The academic master plans are scheduled to be reviewed or revised every four years to coincide with the meeting of the biennial legislature.

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