To: Chris Hudgins  
Dean, College of Liberal Arts  

From: Ruby Fowler  
Asst. Director, Composition Program  

Date: 24 March 2010  
Re: English Language Center  

I was shocked to see the English Language Center included on the list of units and subunits to be considered for elimination. The ELC plays an absolutely vital role in the success of UNLV’s international students. It does far more than provide them with expert instruction in ESL courses to improve their English language skills. It fosters their understanding of, and acclimatization to, American culture; it provides them with a sense of community; it assists them in making the transition from their second language studies to studies in their major field. These are not services that can effectively be absorbed by another department.

In addition, the loss of the ELC would have a significant impact on the teaching of writing at UNLV, in which it plays an integral role. The ELC teaches ENG 113 and ENG 114, Composition I and II for International Students. Moving these students into the ENG 101 and 102 courses would do a great disservice to them; our English Composition instructors are not trained in providing the second language instruction and support that these students need in conjunction with the instruction in academic writing that is the focus of the Composition I and II courses. It would place a significant burden on the Composition Program and the graduate teaching assistants and part-time instructors who make up our pool of ENG 101 and 102 instructors. Our program and our instructors are simply not equipped to serve the needs of international students in our first-year writing classes. Our instructors, many of whom are new to teaching, would be placed in the position of trying to address two very different groups, with very different needs, in the Composition classroom. This would inevitably affect the overall quality of teaching in these classes.

I realize that sacrifices must be made in order to accommodate budget cutbacks. However, we cannot afford to lose the English Language Center and the critical services it provides to the UNLV community.