



## ACADEMIC PROGRAM WORKING GROUPS

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

January 31, 2014

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**BICULTURAL STUDIES  
WORKING GROUP -  
FINAL REPORT**

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**GRUPO DE ESTUDIOS  
BICULTURALES –  
INFORME FINAL**

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**Executive Summary**

“The future is already here, it is just not very evenly distributed.” This claim by the Canadian-American writer William Gibson reflects an overarching position of the Bicultural Studies Working Group. We propose that the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley endorse and establish innovative programs that respond to the past and the present while imagining the future of the Rio Grande Valley and beyond. More specifically, this working group urges UTRGV to include the cultural, linguistic, and geographic assets of the region as integral parts of its formative agenda.

The United States-Mexico border along coastal Texas is a major population center that has experienced unfettered growth during the past two decades. Close to a million and a half people inhabit the northern side of the Rio Grande and another three million populate the Mexican side. More than 90 percent of South Texas’s population is Hispanic, and the trend throughout the state points to an increasing growth of this mostly Spanish-speaking population. It is also important to consider that Spanish is the second most widely spoken language throughout the U.S.

In light of this cultural and linguistic reality, the Bicultural Studies Working Group recommends that UTRGV promote bilingual and bicultural

**Resumen ejecutivo**

“El futuro ya está aquí, sólo que desigualmente repartido”. Esta afirmación del autor canadiense-estadounidense William Gibson refleja la postura general del Grupo de Trabajo sobre Estudios Biculturales, el cual propone que la nueva Universidad de Texas de El Valle del Río Grande (UTRGV por sus singlas en inglés) respalde y establezca programas innovadores que respondan tanto al pasado como al presente, con la mirada puesta el futuro de El Valle del Río Grande y más allá de sus límites geográficos. En concreto, nuestro grupo insta a la Universidad a que incorpore los activos culturales, lingüísticos y geográficos de la región como elemento esencial de su agenda educativa.

La frontera México-estadounidense en su extensión costera del estado Texas constituye un importante centro demográfico que ha experimentado un crecimiento incesante durante las últimas dos décadas. Cerca de un millón y medio de personas viven en la ribera norte del Río Grande, y otros tres millones lo hacen del lado mexicano de la frontera. Más del 90% de la población del sur de Texas es hispana, y la tendencia en todo el estado indica un crecimiento acelerado de este grupo que en su mayoría es hispanohablante. Es también importante tomar en consideración que el español es el segundo idioma más hablado en los EE. UU.

A la luz de esta realidad cultural y lingüística, el Grupo de Trabajo de Estudios Biculturales recomienda que UTRGV promueva la educación



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education. This Working Group understands biculturalism and bilingualism as integral parts of a multicultural context; the bicultural and bilingual environment of the Rio Grande Valley, for instance, nurtures problem solving skills, as well as adaptability and open-mindedness. These are no doubt necessary skills for the 21st century, and are central to shape new leaders at the regional and international levels.

There are other reasons to support bicultural and bilingual education within the context of multiculturalism. First of all, although public schools across the region and higher education institutions have worked to create academic opportunities for all members of the community, the educational needs of the Hispanic-bilingual population must be addressed. Secondly, the integration of the world economy and new technologies, especially in communication and transportation, have intensified contact among peoples and cultures. Bilingual and bicultural competencies are therefore essential for a competitive global workforce. Thirdly, research shows that children who acquire advanced levels of proficiency in second languages experience cognitive advantages compared to monolingual students. For example, bilinguals perform better than monolinguals on divergent thinking tasks, pattern recognition, and problem solving. Further, biliteracy contributes to intellectual development by providing learners access to a broader range of linguistic and cultural resources and hence an ability to negotiate meaning. In short, if students trained in languages and cultures enjoy an acute ability to problem solve

bilingüe y bicultural. Nuestro grupo entiende la biculturalidad y el bilingüismo como parte sustancial de un contexto multicultural: el ámbito bicultural y bilingüe de El Valle del Río Grande, por ejemplo, fomenta el desarrollo de las capacidades para la solución de problemas, así como la adaptabilidad y la apertura de miras. Se trata de destrezas sin duda necesarias para la vida del siglo XXI, y que resultan esenciales para la formación de nuevos líderes a nivel regional e internacional.

Hay otras razones que apoyan la educación bicultural y bilingüe dentro de un contexto multicultural. En primer lugar, aunque las escuelas públicas de la región, así como las instituciones de educación superior, han promovido las oportunidades académicas para todos los miembros de la comunidad, las necesidades educativas de la población bilingüe hispana deben satisfacerse. En segundo lugar, la integración de la economía mundial y las nuevas tecnologías, sobre todo en los ámbitos de la comunicación y del transporte, han intensificado el contacto entre pueblos y culturas. Las competencias bilingües y biculturales son, por lo tanto, esenciales para una capacitación laboral competitiva en la escena global. En tercer lugar, la investigación existente demuestra que los niños que adquieren niveles avanzados en el dominio de segundas lenguas experimentan mayores ventajas cognitivas en comparación con los estudiantes monolingües. Por ejemplo, los bilingües presentan un mejor desempeño que los monolingües en tareas de pensamiento divergente, reconocimiento de patrones y solución de problemas. Además, la competencia textual en dos lenguas contribuye al desarrollo intelectual proporcionando al estudiante acceso a una gama más amplia de recursos culturales y lingüísticos, y con ello la capacidad de negociar la construcción del significado. En pocas palabras, si los estudiantes formados en el campo de las lenguas y las culturas disfrutan de una determinada agudeza para la resolución de



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and to negotiate meaning, among others, then the University will prepare students for the future, which will no doubt require a flexibility of mind, in addition to creative problem-solving skills.

Finally, although policy makers and educators might view bilingual education as a high-risk investment and although there are initial start-up costs, recurrent costs for effective bilingual programs are not significantly greater than those for traditional monolingual programs. (This statement can be supported by evidence gathered by the group's fact-finding mission to the University of Ottawa, a fully bilingual/bicultural university.) By tapping into the language and cultural strengths of the people in the area and the regional strategic advantages, UTRGV will reshape the region; strengthen the state's economy; and provide a bridge to the Americas. By producing graduates with bicultural and bilingual competencies and by partnering with global leaders in research, education, health and other high-growth industries, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley will serve as a leaders fostering intellectual and economic development on local, national, and international levels.

**The Bicultural Studies Working Group recommends the following initiatives:**

1) Build upon the resources and faculty expertise already in place to promote classes that are bilingual and bicultural in terms of form and/or content (e.g., identify dual-language professors who might be able to teach classes in Spanish);

problemas y la negociación del significado entre otros beneficios, la universidad deberá pues prepararlos para un futuro que sin duda requerirá de ellos una mente flexible y destrezas para la resolución creativa de problemas.

Por fin, si bien el estamento político y educativo puede contemplar la educación bilingüe como una inversión de alto riesgo, y aunque sí haya costes iniciales, los costes de mantenimiento recurrentes de programas bilingües eficaces no son significativamente superiores a los de los programas monolingües (esta afirmación se ve respaldada por pruebas evidentes recabadas por la comisión investigadora enviada a la Universidad de Ottawa, una institución totalmente bilingüe y bicultural). Al aprovechar las fortalezas lingüísticas y culturales de la población de esta zona, así como las ventajas regionales de carácter estratégico, UTRGV será capaz de reconfigurar la región, fortalecer la economía del estado y tender un puente entre las Américas. Así, la nueva universidad fomentará con su liderazgo el desarrollo económico y comunitario a nivel local, nacional e internacional graduando estudiantes con competencias bilingües y biculturales, y asociándose con los líderes globales en los campos de la investigación, la educación, las ciencias de la salud y otras industrias de gran crecimiento.

**El Grupo de Trabajo sobre Estudios Biculturales recomienda las siguientes iniciativas:**

1) Aprovechar los recursos y la experiencia del profesorado existentes para fomentar clases de naturaleza bilingüe y bicultural, ya sea en su forma, en su contenido, o de ambas maneras a la vez (es decir, identificar docentes bilingües que pudieran querer impartir clases en español).



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- 2) Create college-level working groups that will continue to examine ways to produce bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate students, especially within the Arts and the Humanities;
- 3) Incentivize bilingual and bicultural teaching and scholarship in tenure/promotion and merit;

**Programs**

- 4) Pursue the articulation of programs, courses and curriculum taught in Spanish, with the goal of *potentially* enabling students to complete 100 percent of the General Education Core in Spanish over the course of a two-year cycle;
- 5) Expand the online offering of courses and programs with a focus on bilingual and bicultural subject matters that might benefit from a global-student market;
- 6) Expand course offerings in Spanish at the upper division and graduate levels;
- 7) Provide regional and international internship/exchange opportunities;
- 8) Integrate Spanish-language instruction with English-language instruction in the School of Medicine in order to foster bilingual and bicultural medical professionals;

- 2) Crear grupos de trabajo a nivel de facultad que continúen estudiando la cuestión de cómo producir estudiantes biculturales y con competencias bilingües y textuales en ambos idiomas, especialmente dentro del ámbito de las Humanidades y las Bellas Artes.
- 3) Incentivar la docencia y la investigación de naturaleza bilingüe y bicultural dentro de los procesos de titularidad, ascenso o incremento salarial.

**Programas**

- 4) Fomentar la articulación de programas, cursos y currículo impartidos en español, con el objetivo potencial de habilitar al alumnado en la compleción del 100 % de los requisitos del Tronco Común Educativo en materias impartidas en lengua española a lo largo de un período cualquiera de dos años.
- 5) Expandir la oferta de materias y programas en línea centrados en temáticas de bilingüismo y biculturalidad que puedan beneficiarse de un mercado educativo global.
- 6) Expandir la oferta de materias impartidas en español en tercer y cuarto año, así como a nivel de postgrado.
- 7) Proporcionar oportunidades de intercambios o pasantías de prácticas a nivel regional e internacional.
- 8) Integrar la instrucción en lengua española y la docencia en lengua inglesa en el futuro currículo de la Facultad de Medicina para fomentar la formación de personal médico bilingüe y competente biculturalmente.





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**Campus Internationalization**

- 9) To articulate gradual immersion opportunities for international students;
- 10) To promote the idea of a Spanish-speaker friendly institution that accommodates the linguistic needs of international students and to provide an optimal learning environment for students of both English and Spanish as a second language;

**Necessary Resources**

- 11) Create a new Institute for Bilingual and Bicultural Affairs (working name) that has a line in UTRGV budget on a permanent basis. It is recommended that the Institute be established at the V.P. level with staffing and several specialized departments;
- 12) Adopt a university-wide policy, along with supporting resources, that value faculty scholarship published in languages other than English;
- 13) Provide resources to strengthen students' biliteracy skills by creating a Spanish-language writing center;
- 14) Establish a faculty-development fund (preferably from new grants) dedicated to support faculty in the personal and curricular development of biliterate and bicultural competencies.

**FULL REPORT FOLLOWS**

**Internacionalización del campus**

- 9) Articular oportunidades graduales de inmersión para los estudiantes internacionales.
- 10) Promover el concepto de una institución favorable al uso de la lengua española y que acomode las necesidades lingüísticas de estudiantes internacionales, y proporcionar un entorno óptimo de aprendizaje para los estudiantes del inglés y del español como segundas lenguas.

**Recursos necesarios**

- 11) Crear un nuevo Instituto para Asuntos Bilingües y Biculturales (denominación provisional) que cuente con una partida presupuestaria permanente en UTRGV. Se recomienda establecer dicho instituto en la categoría de vicerrectorado y que esté dotado de personal propio y varios departamentos especializados.
- 12) Adoptar una política general en la universidad así como recursos materiales que valoren y apoyen la investigación publicada en lenguas distintas al inglés.
- 13) Proporcionar recursos para fortalecer las competencias escritas bilingües de los estudiantes mediante la creación de un centro de apoyo a la redacción en lengua española.
- 14) Establecer un fondo para el desarrollo del profesorado (preferiblemente en forma de subsidios y becas de nuevo cuño) dedicado al desarrollo personal y curricular de las competencias bilingües y biculturales del docente.

**EL INFORME COMPLETO FIGURA A CONTINUACIÓN**

**Biomedical Sciences  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

Biomedical Programs can be broadly defined as areas of study which involve the application of the principles of the natural sciences, especially biology, chemistry and physiology to the study of human beings and clinical medicine. This includes the preprofessional programs which prepare students for pre-med, pre-dent and pre-health professions. Most of these programs are transdisciplinary in nature. Biomedical programs will be expected to play a key role in the transformation of the Rio Grande Valley as the Medical School becomes fully operational. New program development in this area is expected to include a variety of programs. The suggested list of new programs only includes a few for 2015 due to the time constraints of new program proposal development. However, as the timeline moves farther out, the need and feasibility for new biomedical programs will increase.

This report will concentrate on the biomedical sciences and the pre-professional programs such as Pre-Med, Pre-Dent, Pre-Pharm, A-Prime Time and the Biomed Program. Clinical Laboratory Science was included in this working group but differs from the other programs in that it is an allied health professional undergraduate program with separate accreditation and certification requirements. Students who graduate in clinical laboratory science are members of the Health Care Practice Team.

**A. Background and Introduction**

Many paradigm shifts are expected to occur in the coming years. The convergence of new and revolutionary technology in conjunction with changing demographics, rapid scientific advances, as well as social and political values can be expected to reshape access and delivery of education and medicine. Just a few of these drivers are listed below:

- The information revolution (communication and computing)
- Human Genome Project which is leading to personalized, predictive and preventive medical care
- Rapid advances in knowledge and technology --particularly high throughput platforms in molecular biology, nanotechnology, biotechnology and IT
- Ethical, legal and social obligations
- Cultural Competence
- Diversity
- Ageing of society
- Health Care Policy
- Research Support

**B. Knowledge Skills and Attitudes for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Based on the above observations, a partial list of suggested skills, knowledge and attitudes that all graduates should possess has been listed below:

**Skills: For the New Biomedical Science/ Health Professional**

- high-level cognitive skills: abstract reasoning, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration skills
- ability to utilize life-long learning skills
- ability to communicate effectively in both written and verbal formats
- teamwork skills

### **C. Enabling Technologies**

The New University will demand the use of technology and innovative strategies to prepare graduates across the Rio Grande Valley. Student demand will drive the need for an increase in reduced seat courses, completely online courses and web conference modes of instruction. Courses should be offered in formats which are appropriate for course content and student learning styles.

### **D. Academic Programs and Support**

Many of the programs would be cross disciplinary in nature and close ties with other programs and colleges can be expected. New programs should be developed based upon student demand and the changing needs of the region. A heavy emphasis should be placed upon new graduate programs as well as preparing students for graduate school and professional programs.

Two interdisciplinary centers are proposed. One would be the Center for Biomedical Research. It is envisioned that this center would cross colleges and disciplines and bring researchers together around disease based research clusters. Possible clusters include Cancer Biology, Cardiovascular Disease, Obesity and Diabetes, Infectious diseases, Neuroscience, Developmental Biology and Toxicology and Environmental Health Sciences. The center could include support services such as grant writing, statistical support and grant management.

The second center would be a Center for Health Profession Coordination. There are multiple paths for medical school, dental school, pharmacy and the health professions but right now there is no central point of contact to assist students in their goals or to help students find alternate paths when initial plans do not work out. Basic advising for each degree plan should remain in the department but career planning, application assistance, interview and exam prep resources could be centralized. Students may start out as pre-Med, or Biology but they often don't find out about alternate career choices such as allied health if they are housed in a different College. This center would help in facilitating communication between programs housed in different colleges and perhaps shorten time to degree for students.

### **D. What academic structure is most appropriate for the biomedical programs? programs?**

The proposed structure for the biomedical programs proved to be the most difficult question to address. The consensus was that Clinical Laboratory Science needs to be with the other Health Professions since it is a Health Profession Program and graduates will be expected to be part of interdisciplinary health care teams. Clinical Laboratory Science also teaches a course which is part of the Physician Assistant Program. The discipline also has a track within the newly approved Masters Health Science. Likewise the pre- med biology, pre-med chemistry, pre-pharmacy options etc. within chemistry and biology should remain in those units since they are tracks within a major.



Several models were proposed for the Biomedical Sciences Program and the new Biomedical Programs but no consensus was reached by the group. In Model One, the Biomedical Programs would be housed as a department in a College of Science and Math or some similar entity. It is possible that as programs are added, the department would transition to a school or separate college. In model two, it would be a School within the College of Medicine. In Model Three; it would be a separate College. Diagrams for these models are included in the final report.

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**Business  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

After carefully reviewing the guiding principles of the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley (UT-RGV) and examining innovative academic programs and structures at other institutions, the Academic Working Group for Business (AWGB) makes the following recommendations regarding academic programs in business and the corresponding academic structure.

**Academic Programs**

Both the School of Business at the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) and the College of Business Administration at the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) offer academic programs that produce future business leaders, professionals, and academic scholars with international, national, regional, and local impacts. These strong undergraduate, Master's, and Ph.D. programs will be the gems of the new university. Hence, the AWGB recommends existing academic programs at UTB and UTPA continue to be offered by UT-RGV.

For new programs, the AWGB considered innovative programs at other institutions, the unique characteristics and mission of UT-RGV, and national and local demands for the programs. The focus is on offering new Baccalaureate programs that address all these requirements and Master of Science (MS) programs that produce graduates with more in-depth knowledge in their field of specialization. For 2015, we strongly recommend five new programs including BBA in Intercultural Business, BS in Analytics, MS in International Development Studies, MS in Banking and Finance, and MS in Healthcare Informatics, with the first three being our top priorities. The BBA in Intercultural Business would offer coursework in both business and Spanish, reflecting the bicultural/bilingual/biliterate mission the new university. The BS in Analytics is innovative, meets the emerging market demand for data analysts due to big data, and reflects the STEM focus of the new university. The MS in International Development Studies allows UT-RGV to take advantage of its geographic and cultural connections to Latin America. The MS in Banking and Finance and MS in Healthcare Informatics allow us to produce graduates that serve two major industries – finance and healthcare – in the Valley and beyond. In addition, programs such as BBA in Intercultural Business, BS in Analytics, and MS in Healthcare Informatics are all transdisciplinary.

For 2017, we recommend five new programs including BBA in Sustainable Tourism, BBA in Intercultural Marketing, MS in Banking and Finance, MS in Health Information Technology, and MS in Sustainability Management, with the first three being our top priorities. [The MS in Banking and Finance was ranked as a top five program for 2015, but not as a top three priority program; it rose to a top three priority program in ranking all programs for 2017.] These new programs exploit expected growth demands for talents in the national and local tourism, marketing, finance, and healthcare industries. In addition, the MS in Sustainability Management would position us as a national leader in the delivery of a graduate program that emphasizes the 3 R's (reduce, reuse, and recycle).

The new programs we recommend for 2020 are BBA in Cross Border Trade, MS in Digital Forensics and Cybersecurity, MS in Health Information Technology, MS in International Taxation, and BBA in Financial Planning, with the first four being our top priorities. [The MS in Health Information Technology rose in

priority between 2017 and 2020.] These programs allow us to further build on the strengths of our existing programs and new programs introduced in 2015 and 2017 to offer more specialized degrees. For 2025, we recommend a variety of programs at the Bachelor's, Master's, and Ph.D. levels. The top five programs are Ph.D. in Economics, BBA in Commercial Banking, MS in Forensic and Investigative Accounting, BBA in Healthcare Administration, and MS in Quantitative Economics and Finance, with the first three being our top priorities. These programs allow us to continue to offer more specialized degrees and represent the future direction we have identified for the business disciplines.

We have inserted a Special Note listing several other programs we considered and recommend for future consideration and possible implementation. Some build on current and proposed programs to be implemented between 2015 and 2025, while others look ahead to new fields for development. Please see the appendices for more detailed justifications for the top priority programs scheduled for delivery in Fall 2015.

### **Academic Structure**

In addition to innovative programs housed within our current academic structures, we believe that to be responsive to the swiftly changing climate among global business schools and their worldwide market for students, UT-RGV should support the creation of a new college designed to provide logical, thematic and flexible programs for implementation of contemporary missions. The driving force for the new college is to create an independent academic structure focused on developing emerging programs that support changing career demands for our students. Many current emerging programs are transdisciplinary and require unique approaches to broaden curricula that provides educational advantages for our students. This new college must have an administration that is entrepreneurial, strategic and successful at change management, supported by resources that do not compete with traditional programs and resources developed from within the college's own entrepreneurial efforts. It must be ready to address the call of local and regional industry for programs responsive to their needs. It must have the capacity to develop transnational programs that serve to expand horizons for our local students and recruit students from our international partners.

Our proposed structure for the initial iteration of such a new college, the College of Sustainable Commerce, Innovation and Entrepreneurship [CSCIE], would consist of three academic units: School of Technology & Innovation (STI); Center for Sustainability Studies (CSS) and Center for Global Trade (CGT). Initially, STI will house Entrepreneurship and the current UTB Center for Commercialization, developing proposed programs for Digital Forensic & Cybersecurity, Forensic & Investigative Accounting, and Healthcare Informatics degrees delivered across disciplines. CSS will initially offer academic programs, conduct research and provide consultative and applied services in International Development Studies and later in Sustainable Tourism, with the proposed hotel and convention center serving as a living laboratory for the many disciplines required to develop, construct, promote and administer the facility. CGT will support a mission to further develop local, national and global economies with initial programs in International Commerce and Materials & Logistics and implementation of new programs in Cross Border Trade and International Taxation. Through the CGT, UT-RGV would continue the efforts of UTB in promoting and building the Binational Economic Development Zone. Cross-disciplinary research originating from faculty in the CSCIE will have impact locally, regionally and globally.

With our proposed new college we address programmatic, logistic and strategic issues arising from UT-RGV's rare circumstance of having two fully-developed campuses separated by physical distance. Unique, or even similar, colleges established among multiple campuses is not unprecedented. For example, The University of Washington, with one central administration governing its three campuses

located in Seattle, Tacoma and Bothell is organized to take into account the geographic elements that separate them (please see <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/PO/EOIX.html>). Each has a separate School of Business. Our proposed model is structured to facilitate student program selection and administrative services without duplication of programs. The new college would have its own and separate mission defining the purpose for its transdisciplinary offerings. Separate business unit accreditation through The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business [AACSB] will bring about distinctive elements to promote the college in the global marketplace. Branding, external market perception, financial relationships with the institution and business academic unit autonomy will provide UT-RGV with unique opportunities for differentiating itself from thousands of other business schools recruiting globally for students.

Both colleges will focus on tasks that will create value for our regional stakeholders who have unique needs and aspirations. We foresee courses of study designed to prepare students for business careers that transcend borders, and concentrate on our integrated, two-nation region, as well as Latin America's sphere of influence. We propose developing curricula and a culture providing relevant, flexible educational opportunities that meet the needs of and engage our degree-seeking students, non-degree seeking students, and bi-national business community.

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**Community and Public Service  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

The Community and Public Service Group suggests the traditional academic structure of Colleges, with Deans, and Departments with Chairs be followed, with a few deviations. However, they should have a new community engagement support system. In an attempt to promote community engagement, a center with a focus of coordinating this effort should be supported. This should be interdisciplinary in nature and cut across the institution utilizing the expertise from the various disciplines. The various disciplines which are not familiar with community engagement will receive help from the center staff or director to assist with identifying needs of the community which match the expertise of the discipline. Each discipline should have a course in which this type of activity will receive some type of course credit thus providing motivation for students who may not be inclined to participate. Where feasible a modular approach to teaching all courses should be considered.

In addition, University Advancement, the media, and/or the alumni association, to name a few, should be solicited to identify partnerships within the community in order to identify the needs of the community. It is this committee's opinion that all disciplines should and will be able to locate community partners who need services which can be learning projects for our students. This type of system will not only help the community but will make the projects of the students valuable learning experiences and relevant to their field of study. It is further suggested this type of activity be captured on the official transcripts.

The bachelor's programs recommended by this committee include the area of Deaf and hard of hearing studies, and disaster management. There has been growing interest in serving people who are Deaf or hard of hearing and a bachelor's degree is proposed in this area. The Deaf Studies program at UTPA currently has a service learning component as described above. The other bachelor degree proposed by the committee is in the area of disaster management. This is recommended because of the propensity for hurricanes and other natural disasters and the potential for pandemics within the region. A well-educated populous on this topic is beneficial to all.

The master's degrees recommended include health communication and gerontology. As the population ages this area of study becomes increasingly relevant. The doctoral programs this committee has recommended are in the areas of communication, criminal justice, public administration and social work. As with the masters degrees these disciplines are expected to grow in the near future.

Elements that emphasize the various societies and cultures present in this environment should be incorporated within all the degree program, thus embracing the bicultural mission of the new university. Additionally, these new programs will increase the opportunity for students to engage with the public as many courses in this classification are suited to community based projects.

Working Group Co-Chairs	UTB: Diamond Freeberg
	UTPA: Shawn Saladin

Working Group Members	UTB: John Cook, Louis Falk, Michelle Keck, Steve Wilson
	UTPA: Santos Hernandez, Jeffrey McQuillen, S. George Vincentnathan, Aziza Zemrani

**Creative and Performing Arts  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

The Creative and Performing Arts (C&PA) Academic Working group consisted of the disciplines of Art, Music, Dance, Creative Writing English, Creative Writing Spanish, Theatre, Television and Film. The members for the group were:

UTB:

- 4 members of the Music Department
- 1 member of the Visual Art Department

UTPA:

- 1 member from the Modern Languages (Creative Writing)
- 2 members from the Department of Music and Dance (1 Music) & (1 Dance)
- 1 member from the Department of Art
- 1 member from the Department of Communication (TTF)

Of these disciplines, two are present at UTB in the College of Liberal Arts, Music (accredited by NASM) and Visual Arts. At UTPA all the 8 of disciplines are in the College of Arts and Humanities; Department of Art, 2 in Department of Music (accredited by NASM) & Dance, TTF is one of the areas in the Department of Communication (accredited by NAST) and the Creative Writing programs are housed dually in the Departments of English and Modern Language and Literatures.

The existing programs offered by these disciplines from UTB are 4 undergraduate, 2 minors 2 graduate and 2 graduate certificates. From UTPA there are 13 undergraduate, 5 minors, 7 graduate and 2 graduate certificates. (Note: the Graduate program in Theatre is in the process of being phased out by the Coordinating board). It is expected that these degree tracks will be continued in 2015 for the existing students as the universities merge.

As the group was told to think big, there are a number for new program possibilities proposed by the members. 11 new undergraduate programs, 4 new minors, 18 new MA/S and MFA programs and 9 PhDs are on the list from 2015-2025. All would need to be weighed against the actual needs and resources of what finally is put in place for the UT-RGV.

The group looked at a number of existing programs for academic structural inspiration of how to shape an organizational structure for the disciplines and found a number of possibilities for further review. Each had elements that members of the group felt could be incorporated in to a structure that would suit our needs.

Looking at the possible Trans-disciplinary Opportunities was a bit of a challenge given the disciplines outside the area are still being defined and that many of these type of collaborations tend to start at a personal level as faculty from different fields connect. The creative and performing arts on both campuses have a long history of collaboration both within the group of disciplines and with outside entities. We have include a number of possibilities of connections that could be made give time, funding and interest from members of other disciplines.



The group found numerous places where the Bicultural/ Biliterate/Bilingual goals of the UT-RGV can be both incorporated as a component of the foundational academic curriculum of the programs and as part of the support programs and centers in the disciplines.

With Community Engagement, the C&PA disciplines will continue to serve as one of the one of the main contact points between the University and the local community. The hundreds of performances, recitals and exhibits that come from both the student's class requirements and from the co-curricular performing organizations will serve as one of the main faces of the UT-RGV. The performances of dance, music, theatre and art exhibitions that either tour to elementary schools or the ones where the kids are brought on campus are often the first exposure that those students have to the arts. The University serves as resource and location where guest artists/groups can come and share their talents with both the students and the community. Academies and camps will connect more directly with the younger students (and older community members) as they provide education opportunities and outreach. A number of the of the CPA campus groups have earned national reputations.

There are several options in looking at the academic structure for the C&PA disciplines. Several are currently housed as areas with in other departments (Creative Writing and TTF); several are only on one campus and several on both. Each of the disciplines are developing students as artists which requires personal and hands on teaching, geared toward each student. Included in the report are notes from most of the disciplines as to what their needs that they feel will provide the best environment for their students and their success. There were several proposals as to an overall organizational structure. There was uncertainty of how our pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that is UT-RGV are to be shaped and how they will fit when we are not sure whole completed picture is going to look like.

Both of the current creative and performing arts programs (C&PA) enrolling students in Brownsville and Edinburg must be maintained and developed for the most relevant future curricula to function due to the nature of the disciplines themselves. The collaboration of the two campuses will provide for the best synthesis and revision of current degrees and programs, in accordance with the UT mission, into one administrative structure which will be best positioned to encourage innovative projects between the two campuses and the already strong faculty as resources.

We are planning in a manner which build upon our strengths and take advantage of collaboration on meaningful C&PA projects and programs which will give students compelling advantages in the creative and performing arts that are not only unique in the UT System, but also in the entire region.

For the programs currently at both locations, it must remain possible for students to receive *complete training at either campus* and be able to complete their arts degrees at either campus for these reasons: 1) the campuses serve distinct communities. The largest percentage of C&PA students come from the areas close to the campuses. 2) For rehearsals, performances and exhibitions to happen, all of the participants must convene in the same place. The 75-minute travel time between campuses precludes the possibility of weekly travel time for students, especially for Brownsville students who come from one of the poorest cities in America. 3) Required weekly sharing of C&PA faculty between both campuses to provide the necessary training will not be a viable option since both campuses are expected to grow and student population will quickly outrun faculty capacities to manage both campuses. Furthermore, such a circumstance would certainly put the accreditation of programs in jeopardy.

Working Group Co-Chairs:

UTB:	Tom Nevill
UTB:	Tom Grabowski

Working Group Members:

UTB:	Cristina Ballatori, Carlos, Gomez, Jonathan Guist, Michael Quantz
UTPA:	Alvia Ardalani, Peter Dabrowski, Susan Fitzsimmons, Francisco Munoz

**Doctoral Program  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
February 26, 2014**

This report is submitted on behalf of the Doctoral Programs Working Group. The working group appreciates the importance of its tasks knowing that doctoral programs, to a great extent, set a tone and direction for a university. The Academic Working Groups provided a comprehensive and exciting list of potential doctoral programs. We look forward to engaging our colleagues in a discussion of which programs will be developed in order to best meet the strategic needs of the UTRGV.

The charge to the working group was the following:

Identify trans-disciplinary doctoral programs for the new university that will leverage existing strengths as well as the new medical school to move the new university to the status of emerging research university and develop a framework to prioritize new doctoral programs proposed by the Academic Program Working Groups.

**Synopsis of Recommendations**

All 58 proposed doctoral programs as recommended by an Academic Program Working Group were evaluated. The following programs were assessed as meeting a regional need, having potential to be a signature program, and presenting an immediate opportunity:

- Border Studies
- Developmental Education
- Doctorate in Nursing Practice
- Doctorate in Pharmacy
- Environmental Sciences/Biology

The following programs were assessed as meeting a regional need and having potential to be a signature program:

- Public Health
- Occupational Therapy
- Disaster Studies

The following programs were assessed as meeting a regional need and presenting an immediate opportunity:

- Manufacturing Engineering
- Mathematics

**Working Group Members**

Dr. Cynthia Brown, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies  
Dr. Mikhail Bouniaev, Dean, College of Science, Mathematics and Technology  
Dr. Walter Diaz, Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Dr. Charles Lackey, Dean, Graduate Studies  
Dr. Javier Martinez, Dean, College of Liberal Arts  
Dr. John Ronnau, Dean, College of Health Sciences and Human Services

Dr. John Trant, Dean, College of Science and Mathematics

**Education  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
February 19, 2014**

The **Education APWG** met a total of nine times to discuss the future College of Education for UT-RGV. The committee considered program options and academic structure, in addition to the key foci of the new university: bilingual/biliterate/bicultural education, community engagement, and transdisciplinary opportunities.

The committee decided to keep all existing programs from UTB and UTPA. A variety of new programs were envisioned over the next 11 years, including **Master's of Arts in Teaching (MAT)** in several areas. MATs provide students the opportunity to complete a bachelor's degree and master's degree in five years, with a strong focus on practicum and project-based experiences. Students may then decide to complete a graduate program in a specialty area. The committee is also recommending the introduction of **PhD programs**, in addition to current Ed.D. programs over the next 11 years. The issue of accreditation was also discussed, given that UTB has applied for NCATE accreditation, but it was decided that any decisions about future accreditation endeavors at the new university would be made at a future date. Therefore, the committee addressed new programs without considering implications of one current program being accredited and the other not. The committee operated on the assumption that one set of programs would be offered for the new university.

A strong emphasis is placed on **bilingual/biliterate/bicultural education** throughout this committee's recommendations. An **EC-12 Model Demonstration School** is proposed that will include **dual-language development and instruction**. The committee highly values the linguistic strengths of bilingual students in the Rio Grande Valley and believes the new university must capitalize on this strength. The model school student population will reflect the demographics of the RGV and provide opportunities for collaboration with local school districts. In addition to the model school, specific university programs in the college of education are interested in offering dual language instruction. The committee believes this is a desirable extension of an EC-12 focus on bilingual/biliterate/bicultural development.

The committee views these bilingual programs as **transdisciplinary opportunities** with multiple opportunities to collaborate with other university programs and community organizations. Another transdisciplinary opportunity is the proposed creation of **four institutes of innovative theory and practice**: the Institute for Innovative Teaching, Learning, and Assessment; Teachers College; the Institute for Innovative Research and Program Evaluation; the Institute for Innovative Educational Leadership and Policy Studies; and the Institute for Innovative Bilingual and Intercultural Studies (see Appendix B). These institutes will establish theoretical space where faculty can meet for discussion of ideas and submit grant proposals for funding that will result in projects that are housed within specific institutes.

The College of Education will also seek opportunities to collaborate with other programs to establish **environmental education and coastal ecology awareness initiatives**. Given the geographical location of the new university and the global implications, these initiatives will be paramount for the new university and should include education at the EC-12 level.

The committee recommendations also reflect the need for **strong community engagement**. The committee envisions a **service delivery model** where higher education students and faculty work directly onsite in neighborhood schools and are integrally involved in local communities. This will require strong collaboration with local school districts and community organizations. In addition, the committee recommends **student residential living opportunities** for both undergraduate and graduate students. This should enhance recruitment efforts for students at both levels.

In terms of **academic structure**, the committee recommends one dean and multiple associate deans. In lieu of department chairs, program coordinators will report directly to the dean (see Appendix A). In addition, the committee conceptualizes four distinct institutions of innovation (described above).

Finally, the committee envisions both a College and a University that closely resemble the vision of Northeastern University and Worcester Polytechnic University, both of which have an innovative global vision. Specifically, aligning with Northeastern University's vision: "a global, experiential, research university built on a tradition of engagement with the world, creating a distinctive approach to education and research.... Northeastern is an innovation leader—in the forefront of expanding global, entrepreneurial, and interdisciplinary programs and creating new models for online graduate studies and use-inspired research."<sup>1</sup>

Working Group Co-Chairs	UTB: Steve Chamberlain
	UTPA: Paul Sale

Working Group Members	UTB: Joseph R. Corbeil, Laura Jewett, Karin Lewis, Gustavo Valencia
	UTPA: Zumaris Díaz, Joy Esquierdo, Criselda García, Shirley Mills

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<sup>1</sup> See Northeastern University's website at <http://www.northeastern.edu> retrieved 11/13/13



**Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

The proposed degree programs address the need for improved access to career choices in engineering and computer science in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV). This proposal maintains all existing accredited degree programs at both institutions, consolidates common disciplines, strengthens weak programs and creates a cost effective pathway to new programs including masters and PhD programs, as warranted by future developments in technology and by developments in the local, regional, national and global economy.

ABET accredited engineering programs at UTPA include Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering while UTB has an ABET accredited program in Engineering Physics. These five programs will serve as the initial engineering programs at UT-RGV. Both UTPA and UTB have ABET accredited programs in Computer Science. Under ABET regulations, a school may have only one accredited program in Computer Science, thus the degrees will be merged such that only one degree exists. However, to better meet the rapid expansion of the discipline, tracks have been defined that provide students with the option to choose a broad field major or to follow a more individualized degree by choosing one of five tracks within the accredited program: Computational Science, Human Centered Computing and Computing and Media, Data Management and Intelligent Information Systems, Computing and Information Security, and Software Engineering. An attached document describes the integrated computer science degree plans. UTB also provides a degree in Computer Information Technology. The goal is to have the degree ABET accredited by 2017.

Working from a strong base of accredited Engineering and Computer Science programs, new undergraduate programs are proposed to expand the engineering disciplines available to students in the area and to offer instruction in new technologies as they emerge. To effectively develop these new programs, it is proposed that the existing Engineering Physics will serve as an incubator for these new programs. This approach allows the creation of new tracks within the existing Engineering Physics degree in areas such as Bioengineering, Chemical & Petroleum Engineering, and Aerospace to address local economic interests without the expense associated with the creation of an entire program at one time. This approach sustains the accreditation status for students in the Engineering Physics degree plan and again, is specifically aimed at providing the scaffolding to introduce new disciplines in a gradual and cost effective fashion as warranted by future developments in technology and by developments in the local and global economy.

Additionally, the Engineering Physics degree supports the creation of an elite program in Engineering that would draw the best and the brightest of the Rio Grande Valley to view UT-RGV as the place to go to get their engineering degree. Potential tracks that would elicit this type of attraction are Bioengineering (or Biomedical Engineering) and Nano- Materials and Technology.

The proposal also addresses the reality that not all students interested in Engineering and Computer Science have the requisite background or competency in mathematics required by most engineering

disciplines by proposing the continuation and strengthening of the existing UTB Engineering Technology degree. The engineering technology degree is not yet accredited and in its current state, with one FTE is not accreditable. The degree however is of great value to the area, especially as it relates to the impact that manufacturing, and infrastructure development and construction have on the local economy. Developing an accredited engineering technology program gives area students, inclined toward engineering yet not toward mathematics, the opportunity to pursue a degree while concurrently filling a significant local workforce need.

The proposal addresses regional issues of college readiness in the K-12 student population in the Rio Grande Valley. The development of an educator track within the college in 2015 is focused on providing the area with much needed K-12 teachers with expertise in engineering and computer science. This will afford students who have a profound desire to share their knowledge the opportunity to encourage children to study STEM disciplines, as well as support the enhance the regional competency in the literacy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Along with the undergraduate programs, the proposed new graduate programs are initially aimed at establishing Ph.D.'s which are requisite to developing a research level institution. The PhD in Manufacturing & Advanced Materials specifically addresses the need for a highly trained technical workforce to encourage the existing manufacturing companies (maquiladoras) in the region to relocate their design functions to the area as well. This degree makes use of the extant local faculty expertise in the two areas of manufacturing and materials science. The Masters and PhD in Data Analytics responds to a national need for data management, data modeling, data integration, data warehousing, data analysis, data mining, data visualization, quantitative methods, and computational thinking. The proposed degrees pertinent to engineering and computer science disciplines enable faculty in the college to participate broadly in knowledge creation, application, and dissemination. Increased educational attainment, particularly as outlined in the proposal, will improve the quality of life of not only the students, but also their immediate and extended families. Maintaining and expanding the programs as proposed will formalize a sustainable infrastructure that will improve persistence and encourage excellence, as well as nurture leaders prepared for the challenges that impact the social and economic well-being of the Rio Grande Valley, and more broadly the world.

The proposed plan is dependent upon appropriate resources in terms of learning and research space and facilities, as well as technical and non-technical staff.

Working Group Co-Chairs

UTB: Juan R. Iglesias  
UTPA: Robert Freeman

Working Group Members

UTB: Immanuel Edinbarough, Sanjay Kumar, Mahmoud Quweider, Yong Zhou  
UTPA: Heinrich Foltz, Jungseok Ho, Wendy Lawrence-Fowler, Rajiv Nambiar

**Health Professions  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

The Health Professions Working Group (HPWG) brought together faculty from eight programs (three from UT-Brownsville and five from UT-Pan American). This group met three times and did much of the work by way of e-mail correspondence. The faculty involved were all focused on the charge given them, to start to work of building the structure of the new university, UT- Rio Grande Valley.

The first task undertaken by the committee was compile a “dream list” of programs, related to the health professions fields, which could have a place in the new university. This initial listing was comprised of more than 40 separate program areas of which 27 are currently being offered between the two institutions. The initial arrangement of programs was done in a non-traditional manner. Rather than group programs into classic department/college structures, Michael Lehker suggested the wellness model (dimensions of health approach to organization). The use of the wellness model will be of critical importance in the next phase of program planning and development as we look at the interdisciplinary education concept which is becoming more popular across the country and with the changing health and wellness movement, necessary. This concept will ensure a true connection across the health disciplines with a common purpose at the forefront of the education of future health care providers.

The second task was to determine which of the current programs need to be offered immediately at the new institution and list any new programs. The 27 programs currently being offered were all selected to continue to be offered in the Fall of 2015 (this list does not include any of the nursing programs). Of the programs (excluding nursing) there were only a few that are currently duplicated between the two institutions. These duplicates are the Kinesiology and Health and Human Performance Departments at UTPA and UTB. The consolidation of the Kinesiology non-certified and Kinesiology EC-12<sup>th</sup> grade certification programs under the new structure will need to be done. It was also determined that given the large number of programs, no new programs would be implemented in Fall of 2015; however, it is possible to initiate several interdisciplinary courses.

The third task was to look to the future. Given the large number current programs and even larger number proposed programs the working group developed a list of priority programs that appear both more realistic and feasible in the next fifteen years. This includes an emphasis on the prevention side of health care with the focus on biomedical engineering, social work, and exercise science as the key areas for expansion.

The fourth task the group undertook was the structural component of the new institution. While the HPWG did not reach a final consensus on a proposed academic structure the idea of having a Vice or Associate Provost over all of the health professions was an idea proposed early in the discussions. Under this position would then fall the academic deans for each of the colleges which house the health profession programs with an associate dean for academics and an associate dean for research in each college/school. The next level would include program directors for each program at each level of education as appropriate. This task was not completed in full due to the complex nature of the health professions and the need for further discussion on the trans-disciplinary work that needs to be built into the institution.

Working Group Co-Chairs

UTB: Christopher Ledingham  
UTPA: Willard Baker

Working Group Members

UTB: Eric James, Murat Karabulut, Michael Lehker, Terry Overton  
UTPA: Lydia Aguilera, Sonya Salinas, Lin Wang, Shirley Wells

**Liberal Arts and Humanities  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

Humanities are central to understanding the human condition and orienting ourselves in time, space, and culture. The humanities are inherently trans-disciplinary in their approach to developing reading, writing, and communication abilities; deep and critical understanding; and problem-solving skills through open critical inquiry, case studies, internships, study abroad, and multidimensional approaches. As such, the humanities share common goals with all academic disciplines of study but are particularly close to the social sciences and arts. These disciplines, often called the liberal arts, are basic to all other areas of inquiry in technology and the sciences. **We believe UT Rio Grande Valley must place the humanities at the trans-disciplinary center of the new bicultural / biliterate / bilingual institution at the undergraduate level.** Graduates, regardless of major, with a strong background in the humanities will find themselves better prepared for the challenges of employment and service to society in a rapidly changing region as well as our global community. Recent research indicates that many of the most successful leaders in business, industry, medicine, research science, engineering, and other professional careers have an undergraduate degree in the humanities. (See “The Humanities Matter!,” an infographic from the University College London: <http://4humanities.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/humanitiesmatter300.pdf> )

**Academic Programs**

The Working Group’s recommendations for new academic programs are centered on the disciplines represented in the Group: English, History, Philosophy, and Modern Languages. Current offerings in these disciplines are very strong and, on that foundation, we advocate developing both broader and more articulated programs at the bachelor’s and graduate level. As the new university will be bicultural/bilingual/biliterate, we advocate using UTeach Liberal Arts at the undergraduate level to enrich the discipline study of prospective teachers, and the immediate set-up of both master’s and doctoral programs in Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies including MAs in border, transnational and cross-cultural studies, and a doctorate in language, literacy and sociocultural studies. Somewhat later, we advocate developing BAs in areas such as global studies, new media (writing podcasts for example), MAs in Spanish--English applied linguistics, translation, and additional doctoral programs in literature and cultural studies with a border emphasis. Eventually we recommend graduate programs in philosophy and Latino/a studies.

**Trans-Disciplinary Opportunities**

The liberal arts and humanities offer multiple opportunities for trans-disciplinary collaboration with other academic areas in learning, teaching, and research. We recommend a variety of alternatives: a trans-disciplinary core curriculum where students enroll in theme-based classes taught by faculty teams representing complementary disciplines; trans-disciplinary learning communities for academic minors; adoption of the UT Austin “flag system,” which can be used to ensure all students take an agreed upon number of semesters in a theme-based interdisciplinary approach as well as particular types of courses with a focus on diversity, Spanish language instruction, service learning, and experiential learning; introduction of the UTeach Liberal Arts program to increase discipline

content for future teachers; a “languages across the curriculum” program to enhance bilingual professional competency; and a variety of writing programs with particular emphasis on “Writing Across the Curriculum.” The new academic programs in area, border, and global studies are inherently trans-disciplinary. Finally, we propose two innovative trans-disciplinary schools: the School of Material and Digital Culture, and the School of Trans-disciplinary Critical Inquiry.

### **Bicultural / Biliterate / Bilingual Mission**

The Working Group includes disciplines key to the bicultural/biliterate/bilingual mission of UTRGV. A number of proposed programs address UT-RGV’s mission focus by taking up the regional languages and cultures as their object of study and method of instruction so that students can utilize this knowledge in their lives and professions. They include programs in Spanish-English applied linguistics; language literacy and sociocultural studies; border studies; teaching English as a second language; Spanish <-> English translation; and public history. We find particularly promising the implementation of a “languages across the curriculum” program.

### **Community Engagement**

Humanities education sets the standard for using the academic disciplines to engage students with their community. Research in the areas of regional linguistics and history, internships in local professional, civic, philanthropic, and educational institutions, and literacy service learning projects are just some examples of how students will be guided in community service through programs in the humanities. The emphasis of the humanities on the human condition and critical thinking provides a flexible platform for all of the proposed academic programs to participate dynamically in the community engagement mission of UTRGV.

### **Academic Structure**

The Working Group recommends two alternatives for situating the humanities in an academic structure that supports trans-disciplinary learning, teaching, and research:

- College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences composed of four schools: 1) Performing Arts including art, music, dance, creative writing, theatre and their corollary teaching majors; 2) Humanities including history, philosophy, English literature, Spanish literature and their corollary teaching majors; 3) Language & Communication including communication studies, English language/linguistics, Spanish language/linguistics, English rhetorical writing programs, Spanish rhetorical writing, second language classes--ASL, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish-- communication disorders, and education disciplines in language--bilingual, reading etc.; and 4) Social Sciences including anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science and their corollary teaching majors. These could alternately be individual colleges, but we believe having them within one larger unit will lead to greater ease facilitating discipline connections where, for example, a BA in English includes creative writing, English literature, English linguistics & language, and English rhetorical writing courses.
- College of Liberal Arts (humanities and social sciences) including all disciplines noted above in departments, incorporating the transdisciplinary learning community/theme based concepts in place of minors, using the "flag system" and other programs noted above to ensure a broad liberal arts education for every student at UT-RGV emphasizing writing and communication, cultural diversity, service and experiential learning, and critical thinking.



Working Group Co-Chairs

UTPA: Pamela Anderson-Mejias

UTB: David Fisher

Working Group Members

UTPA: Michael Faubion, Gregory Gilson, Mark Noe, Shawn Thomson

UTB: Eduardo Del Rio, John Newman, Philip Samponaro, Elena Vega-Sampayo

**Nursing  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

The Nursing Academic Working Group, comprised of Nursing faculty from both The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) and The University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB), met and corresponded regularly from October 2013 through January 2014 to develop the new Nursing unit's plan and recommendations. The initiatives proposed were designed to address the new university's (now UT-Rio Grande Valley [RGV]) *Guiding Principles* and to meet the needs of the community, Nursing profession, and students. The Group initially addressed similarities and differences in the overall missions of both Nursing educational units (units) as well as their current program philosophies. The missions of the two units hold many similar philosophical concepts that support their University missions. Likewise, the UT-RGV Nursing unit's new mission will not only integrate the two current missions but also be congruent with UT-RGV's mission. The new Nursing unit's mission will competently address the needs of the culturally diverse society it serves and will support the quality of regional health care (lay, folk, professional).

The Group also addressed its future structure and agreed that Nursing should be on par with other major UT-RGV academic units, no matter how they will be designated, i.e., College or School. According to Shalala (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2013), significant improvements in health care quality require nurses in leadership, education, training, and design at the center of the system (AACN Workforce Programs, 2013), especially Hispanic nurse leaders. Thus, preparation of such nurses in an academic center that also includes a medical school requires an organizational structure where Nursing operates as an autonomous unit and whose Dean is a nurse collaborating in concert with and reporting to the same University administrator as does the Dean of Medicine. An autonomous Nursing organization will enable innovation while maintaining accreditation standards. Collectively, the two current Nursing units value this opportunity to create such an organizational structure in the new University and build an innovative venue for dissemination of Nursing ideas. Initial resources may present a challenge, but the working Group will seize the opportunity to identify creative venues that provide nursing care to our community, such as Centers of Evidence-Based Practice, Caring Practices for Elderly Populations, and Caring Practices for Family and Community Health.

UTPA and UTB have each significantly advanced nursing education in the region via accessible undergraduate (BSN) and graduate (MSN) Nursing education programs with high student successes and contributed to meeting the complex health care needs unique to the RGV. Now that the two institutions are consolidated into UT-RGV, their synergistic potential will be optimized, and the UT-RGV College of Nursing (CON) will have an even greater impact on professional health care delivery in the RGV by providing enhanced student access to educationally sound and varied Nursing programs taught by highly qualified experienced faculty using sophisticated next-generation technology that will positively impact culturally congruent health care delivery. That robust technology will facilitate the customization of learning resources (e.g., clinical lab simulation, hybrid or fully online distance education) at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as alleviate some of the barriers to student enrollment (e.g., face-to-face class times, class caps, distance, work hours) and clinical-site placement.

The Group happily noted that the two campuses offer complementary programs (see Final Report Template), but accreditation was another issue. Although both UTB and UTPA Programs support AACN's

*Essentials*, only UTPA's Programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), and future plans include having the UT-RGV CON's programs accredited by CCNE. Because curricular congruence among both units' programs is vital, the UTB CON faculty unanimously agreed in October to adjust the UTB BSN curriculum to match UTPA's, and a curriculum change was submitted to the UTB University Curriculum Committee in January to begin that process. Currently, the RN-to-BSN delivery options differ at the two sites, with UTB's being completely online, but UTPA will offer a fully online option in Fall 2014. The UT-RGV will offer both RN-to-BSN program delivery options, face-to-face and online, to provide access to a wide variety of students, i.e., a campus or hybrid option for those desiring or needing it (e.g., international students) and online for those who do not; the fully online option has a far-reaching audience. The same curricula for both BSN and MSN Programs will be offered Fall 2015 along with a new post-MSN Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner track. An increase in the number of Nursing students and graduates is anticipated.

Such an increase is not only welcomed but also crucial due to the aging population and retiring nurses (per Texas Coalition Factsheet, 46 = average age of nurses, 54 = average age of faculty), with 42% of nurses being eligible to retire in Texas within the next 12 years. Faculty vacancy has repeatedly been cited as a primary factor hindering maximum student capacity in our nation's Nursing schools, with it being the primary reason that >5,000 qualified applicants were denied admission in Texas alone in 2012. After graduation, most nurses practice in their home states (AACN, 2013), so an increased number of graduates could help alleviate the expected shortage. Moreover, the Institute of Medicine/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, provides clear evidence on how nurses should practice in the future. The key messages of this report are that nurses should achieve higher levels of education through an improved educational system that promotes seamless academic progression, nurses should practice to the full extent of their education, scope of practice limitations should be removed, and nurses should be full partners with other health care professionals in redesigning health care in the U.S. (Future of Nursing, 2010). The IOM also recommended that 80% of the Nursing workforce be BSN-prepared by 2020.

Graduate education for nurses provides opportunities to specialize and practice autonomously as Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs = certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners [NP], clinical nurse specialists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists [CRNA]) as well as become nurse faculty, nurse researchers, nurse administrators, et al. Currently, NPs and CRNAs comprise the largest groups of APRNs, 65% and 23%, respectively, and the need for both groups is expected to grow in south Texas, especially since NPs increase access to health care services particularly in underserved areas (Medical Education Projection of Needs, 2008). UT-RGV will address these recommendations by offering APRN educational programs to help meet RGV health care needs.

With these key ideas and regional needs in mind, the Group recommended program offerings from 2015 to 2025. All BSN and MSN Programs currently offered at both institutions will also be offered in Fall **2015** along with a new post-MSN Psychiatric/Mental Health NP track. Since many prospective students with non-nursing baccalaureate degrees have indicated an interest in Nursing, the Group decided on a 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Accelerated BA/BS-to-BSN or MSN option for Fall **2017**. An RN (ADN)-to-MSN, an MSN with a Nursing Informatics focus, an MSN Role Specialty in Forensics Nursing, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice in Family Nursing will also launch then.

According to the Texas Board of Nursing (BON), the state's senior population will expand more than most other states from 2010 to 2030, with the age 65+ population increasing over 100% (5.19 million), and age 85+ will increase 94.2% (<http://www.mcfarlin-group.com/aging-trends/Group> from the BON

strategic plan). Elder care in the home setting will require a redesign of both professional health care delivery and Nursing education. Concomitantly, BON also reports seriously inadequate learning experiences across the state in specialty areas such as child health. As such, the Group is recommending two MSN NP tracks in **2020**: Adult-Gerontology Primary Care and Pediatric/Child Health Primary Care. In addition, a Doctor of Nursing Anesthesia Practice will be launched.

With the critical national shortage of Nursing faculty, graduates from PhD programs are not keeping pace with the number of yearly faculty retirements, severely curtailing Nursing school enrollment. In Texas alone, the huge number of qualified Nursing applicants coupled with a current state deficit of 22,000 RNs and a projected deficit of 70,000 by 2020 offer a shocking future reality. This dismal future could be improved with an increased supply of Nursing faculty prepared at the doctoral level, so the Group has recommended launching a PhD in Nursing by **2025**.

The initiatives described above have multiple opportunities for transdisciplinary collaboration, interprofessional education, and community participation. The Forensics and Informatics graduate degrees are transdisciplinary by nature. For example, Forensics Nursing would collaborate with disciplines such as social work, psychology, and criminal justice. Nursing, medicine, business, and statistics can collaborate for a successful informatics program. Interprofessional opportunities abound in the community with medicine, dietetics, public health, biomedicine, pharmacy, education, business, social work, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. A primary example of such an interprofessional/interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary opportunity is the nurse-managed clinics in the *colonias*.

The Nursing programs will have cultural competence as an integral piece interwoven throughout the curriculum. The CON philosophy and mission will reflect the importance of culture in self as well as in caring for others. Expected student outcomes in each of the courses will require that students demonstrate cultural competence in addressing the health care needs of individuals in a multicultural, multilingual world. The unique region where the university is located may be reflected by the inclusion of Spanish terminology for health professionals as part of the BSN coursework. Opportunities for cultural immersion will be available through post-baccalaureate and post-masters practice in Spanish-speaking *colonias*, study abroad programs, and student exchanges. As such, the CON will foster professional health care delivery by preparing nurses to serve as client advocates who provide safe (mind-body-spirit), holistic, culturally competent care to facilitate self-care and maximize wellness by helping people help themselves.

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**Science and Mathematics  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

In most respects, the existing Science and Mathematics faculty/programs address the missions of UT RGV. It is simply a matter of “fine tuning” our operations when we become a new university. All of our proposed actions build on the strengths of the two institutions and seek to eliminate current weaknesses. We have proposed a College of Science and Mathematics organized with a Dean, an Associate Dean for Academics, and an Associate Dean for Research. The Departments (led by Chairs) serve as the organizational entity for the faculty and the students. Faculty and students then would have the flexibility to interact with the various research centers (led by Center Directors) and teaching programs (led by Program Directors) without being constrained by their home department. This approach would facilitate an increase of the already prevalent transdisciplinary interactions.

Because of the focus on the geographic region, the new College would be naturally bicultural/binational/biliterate/bilingual and would also engage the community. Both the proposed teaching programs and the proposed research centers were designed to meet the demands of our growing population. Once all are implemented, our proposed actions will bring considerable positive attention to our College and our University from the State, National, and International levels.

With the national attention on adding STEM graduates, we see UT-RGV as a great opportunity to grow the offerings in STEM fields for the LRGV. We propose to continue offering lower-division and upper-division courses in all of the sciences and mathematics fields on both academic campuses of the new university. An example of how the faculty will work together to help students throughout the region earn their STEM degrees is that we will coordinate the scheduling upper-division courses so that students will have as many courses available as possible. For instance, Physical Chemistry I and II have been offered every other year at UTB and UTPA. With our new college, Physical Chemistry can be offered in even numbered years in one location and odd numbered years in the other. This will make courses available at all times and semester to the students of UT-RGV.

Faculty from both academic campuses have been collaborating on research for years. We see the collaborations continuing and expanding with the new structure. The new interdisciplinary research centers will be home to faculty to help facilitate additional collaborations. Fortunately, this will not be new to the faculty, just a modification in the structure of how it is organized. We see this as an opportunity to leverage additional external funding for regional collaborations.

What the faculty see in this process are many opportunities for growth and expansion of existing and growing programs. We seek expansion rather than concentration of programs in one location or the other.

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**Social Sciences  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
January 31, 2014**

The Social Sciences Working Group is pleased to present this final report of our work in planning what we hope will be not only a university for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but a university for the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, the Americas and the Gulf of Mexico that brings together the highest quality teaching and research, along with strong community-based programs that serve to expand and deepen the impact of the university on the local community and beyond. We offer a set of modest and achievable proposals that are significant in impact and broad in scope.

**The College of Engaged Social Sciences**

The College (or School) of Engaged Social Sciences will constitute an essential part of the core academic programs of the new university. The social sciences have a long tradition in academe, and our proposals honor and preserve that tradition within recognized, well-established disciplinary boundaries, while laying the groundwork for innovative inter- and transdisciplinary programs that build on synergies from within and without the College to foster learning and research that engages students, scholars and the community.

**Highlights of our work:**

1. We fully embrace the desire to develop innovative and creative inter- and transdisciplinary programs. However, it is our sense that existing programs at UTB and UTPA should be preserved in the new university. Existing programs build on faculty strengths; maintain the integrity of the tenure process with faculty appropriately trained to assess the contributions of probationary faculty; and, above all, ensure that graduating students who wish to pursue advanced studies elsewhere are not hindered in their access to traditional programs. Nonetheless, we have also suggested some degree programs that reflect inter- and transdisciplinary approaches.
2. The group also recognizes the value of community engagement. In our discussions, we have referred to these programs as being housed in a College (or School) of Engaged Social Sciences. In addition to rigorous academic training in the classroom, we propose that all students in the College be required to participate in community engagement through internships and/or community-based research projects. This also incorporates the bilingual, bicultural and biliterate mission of the new university. In addition, we feel that community-based research and engagement projects should be reflected in workload assessments and balanced against teaching loads and other elements of faculty workload evaluation.
3. Interdisciplinary programs offered through the College of Engaged Social Sciences will be distinctive in that their focus will offer rigorous training in social science methodologies—including quantitative, qualitative, historical and interpretive—that provides students with the tools to succeed in standard nationally recognized departments, innovative interdisciplinary academic departments, and in professions that require policy and social analysis.
4. As is detailed in the Report and the attached Program Descriptions, we are proposing three entirely new transdisciplinary academic programs: Transborder Studies, Sustainable Communities and Wellness and Well-being Studies. In addition, we are proposing program



expansions with new degrees in a number of the existing programs. See the Report Addendum for detailed descriptions of these programs.

5. We recommend that the departments of Economics and Criminal Justice be recognized as academic programs in the social sciences and housed in the College of Engaged Social Sciences. Historically, economics has been understood as a social science (indeed, it is one of the founding disciplines of the social sciences), and its location in an academically-oriented college is more appropriate than in a professional school primarily oriented toward preparing students for the business world. This is not to deny the importance of economics to the business community, but it enables a more expansive understanding of economics as not just a *business* concern, but a matter of great *social* importance. Although a newer discipline, the same arguments hold for Criminal Justice. Criminal Justice is much more than a training program for law-enforcement personnel, but an academic discipline that examines the social conditions that contribute to crime, as well as the conditions for justice and its application. Further, students in both of these programs would benefit substantially from the community engagement that will be integrated into the College of Engaged Social Sciences.
6. Although not included in our working group, we believe that the department of History should be considered as a social science, so we have included History programs in our listing of programs offered.
7. We recommend the following to address what are principally nominal differences between UTPA's and UTB's structure:
  - a. The Department of Political Science (UTPA) and Department of Government (UTB) are not of one mind regarding a preferred name, with some preferring Department of Politics and others preferring Department of Political Science.
  - b. The Department of Psychology (UTPA) would be retained, and what is now the UTPA Department of Anthropology and Sociology would be split into separate departments in each discipline. The UTB Department of Behavioral Sciences would then be divided up into its constituent units.

## Conclusion

The Social Science Working Group was delighted to have had the opportunity to join our colleagues in dreaming about new and exciting innovations in teaching and research. We should close by stressing that the implications of such innovations for the traditional values of faculty governance, professional autonomy, and authority over pedagogic strategies and curriculum is an ongoing, vital concern to faculty. We look forward to deliberating over such matters as we construct a new university of the highest quality that will transform Texas and the nation by becoming a leader in student success, teaching, research and healthcare.

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**Transdisciplinary  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
1/31/14**

**Alignment with UT-Rio Grande Valley**

The committee developed the proposed program structure and content with careful attention to the central values of UT-RGV in mind. Recommendations were built around three core aims of the forthcoming University: *Transdisciplinarity*, *Bicultural/Biliterate/Bilingual* orientation, and *Community Engagement*.

*Transdisciplinarity*

The committee felt a new structure was the best means by which to coordinate collaborative scholarly and pedagogical efforts. The proposed *College of Transdisciplinary Studies* will serve as an institutionalized environment within which scholars from various disciplines will address common research problems and build interdisciplinary program curricula.

*Bicultural/Bilingual/Biliterate*

The proposed BA, MA, and Ph.D. programs support the central mission of the New University, which is to a) create a bicultural/biliterate/bilingual learning environment and b) advance research programs to improve the local and global community. Proposed programs in border studies, border economics, and transnational studies help to refocus the University's research and pedagogical mission to fulfill the new bicultural/biliterate/bilingual vision. The proposed programs in medicine offer training in tropical disease management, diabetes studies, and regenerative medicine, all of which were conceived in relation to the common health problems encountered in the RGV and Central and South America. Proposed graduate programs in environmental science and disaster studies offer a key opportunity to study international resource management and environmental impact issues in important areas such as water and energy.

*Community Engagement*

The proposed programs in Childhood and Youth Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, and Justice Studies offer opportunities for civic engagement projects to address a variety of social and public policy issues that can have a direct influence on community members in the RGV and Central and South America, including literacy, educational access, immigration issues, gender equity issues, and other social justice issues.

**Key Recommendations**

- The committee advocates for the creation of a *College of Transdisciplinary Studies* to house the University's current and future transdisciplinary departments, programs, and schools. The transition to the planned transdisciplinary University may be facilitated by a) leveraging present transdisciplinary Centers and b) developing new transdisciplinary Centers.
- The committee's recommendation for building a truly interdisciplinary UTRGV synthesizes the approaches taken by Tennessee Tech in creating a transdisciplinary college with that taken by Vanderbilt in their commitment to building interdisciplinary Centers and Institutes. In doing so, two faculty groups are accommodated. First, faculty interested exclusively in transdisciplinary research will have an institutional home in which collaboration is a central mission. Alternatively, scholars outside of the Transdisciplinary College, who are committed to basic

research but whose work has transdisciplinary elements or applications, will find collaborative opportunities within the Centers.

- Simultaneously, the transition to the New University will be accompanied by the preservation of all present Colleges and Departments. Doing so ensures commitment to basic research and provides students with a variety of disciplinary degrees for which market demand has long existed. Even as an extreme case of interdisciplinary integration, ASU continues to offer traditional degrees (e.g., B.A. in Anthropology) along with interdisciplinary degrees (B.A. in global health.)
- Scholars housed within the *Transdisciplinary College* will hold joint appointments within the new college as well as the department of the discipline under which their degree falls.
- The *Transdisciplinary College* will be headed by a Dean whose roles will include administrative leader, advocate for the college, and liaison to other academic and administrative units within the New University. This college will be structured “horizontally” - it is empowered by its dean to work with every department, program, and unit unlike traditional “vertical” units that concentrate on their own mission.
- Pre-existing Centers with transdisciplinary themes should be leveraged to encourage the development of interdisciplinary programs at UTRGV. These include (but are not limited to):
  - Statistical Consulting Center
  - Center for Border Economic Studies
  - Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center
  - English Language Institute
  - South Texas Border Health Disparities Center
  - Coastal Studies Laboratory
  - Center for Subtropical Studies
- The establishment of new interdisciplinary Centers will further encourage collaborative work between faculty. Proposed centers include (but are not limited to):
  - Center for Spatial Information Technology
  - Center for Applied Statistics and Advanced Computing
  - Center for Disaster Studies
  - Transdisciplinary Stable Isotope Lab
  - South Texas Center for Public Health Studies
  - Forensic Science Lab
- Finally, within the proposed Transdisciplinary College, the following Schools are proposed to form the initial core:
  - School of Global Health
  - School of Earth and Space Sciences
  - School of Science/Life Sciences and Education
  - School of Transnational Studies/Border Studies and Civic Issues
  - School of Environmental Studies
  - School of Ibero-American Arts

### **Transition Challenges and Opportunities**

The committee identified the following challenges and opportunities during transition to the New University that may not be solely relevant to transdisciplinary work:

- *Tenure and Promotion* – The committee raised concerns over the tenure and promotion criteria to which transdisciplinary scholars will be held. Workload and performance reviews relevant to promotion and tenure should appropriately quantify and reward transdisciplinary efforts.
- *Faculty Workload* – Heavy teaching loads are not commensurate with the normal workload of faculty at research universities. They preclude classroom innovation, publication, and, especially, the preparation of grants. A critical step towards becoming a research university will involve reevaluating current teaching and service requirements of faculty.

- *Funding*—Support for existing programs and new programs will require greater financial commitments on the part of the New University. Proposed new programs and centers should not be solely responsible for initial self-funding; as a result, a strong emphasis should be placed on innovative and effective methods to provide start-up funds and seed money. The regional focus of each new proposed, transdisciplinary program should facilitate partnerships with private / public sector entities and foundations.
- *Student placement challenges*—Caution should be exercised in creating new programs, the litmus test for which should be, “does the new program fulfill a clear intellectual, community, and/or market need?”

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**UTeach  
Academic Program Working Group**

**Executive Summary  
February 24, 2014**

The UTeach program at The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) and The University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) is an excellent avenue toward success in achieving the goals of improving education in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) of Texas. UTeach trains high quality STEM teachers who could train current educators in subjects they are assigned to teach. The program addresses the need for high-quality educators and provides UTeach students a secondary teacher career option in addition to their respective degrees in mathematics or science. In addition, these well-trained STEM teachers will have a great effect on student performance in secondary schools across the LRGV and the state. UTB and UTPA are working together not only to fulfill the goals of the program, but also to help develop a better future for residents of the RGV.

UTPA and UTB are two of seven universities in the State of Texas replicating the UTeach model developed at The University of Texas at Austin in 1997. The UTeach Institute was established in 2006 in response to national concerns about the quality of K-12 education in the STEM fields. Since 2006, the UTeach Institute has supported the replication of UTeach at 35 Universities across the United States and has led efforts towards continuous improvement of the UTeach Model. According to enrollment statistics for fall 2013 released by the UTeach Institute, the combined enrollment of UTB and UTPA was 365 which places this total ahead of all other replicating universities in the State of Texas. Considering that UTPA and UTB began implementation two years ago while the other two, University of North Texas and University of Houston, began their UTeach program six years ago, this indicates a great potential for the training of high quality STEM teachers for the RGV, the State of Texas, and the country. With this potential it is possible that UTRGV could easily become a leader in training high quality, UTeach STEM educators. Expectations are for these UTeach educators to become leaders in transforming public education in the RGV to a student-centered learning environment.

The nationally renowned and highly successful UTeach model was implemented at both UTB and UTPA in fall 2012. This STEM-based, secondary teacher preparation program was a response to critical shortage of qualified mathematics and science teachers in schools across South Texas. The two institutions committed to providing institutional resources and development office staff to assist in seeking external funding for the programs during the replication phase and to develop an endowment fund for the continuance of the program after 2016. Expectations for the UTeach program, by graduating high quality STEM teachers, are to play an important role in assisting the youth of the Rio Grande Valley to become skilled in high-tech, cutting-edge careers that will benefit not only the Rio Grande Valley but the entire State of Texas. There is a need to recruit top students to the UTeach program so that they can teach in high-need schools by providing paid internships or scholarships to these recruits. The recruitment of these top students will enhance this clinically intensive program in partnership with local school districts, integrating disciplinary and pedagogical instruction, and taught by clinical and academic faculty, including two years of post-graduation induction services. These internships could allow UTeach students to do touring as part their field experiences, particularly, in community centers located in colonias throughout the RGV.

The UTeach group recommends working with school districts in the RGV that do not already have T-STEM high schools in creating high-tech schools within their districts. These high-tech schools are to

focus on the future STEM fields, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The schools are to serve as models for inquiry- and project-based learning environments which are different than the traditional setting. In this project-based environment learning is student-driven and offers engaging and collaborative opportunities for learning. These high schools are to serve all students, particularly, underrepresented groups and the economically disadvantaged. More importantly these schools will have technology integrated across the curriculum and could serve as training for our UTeach students as they do the required field experiences throughout the program.

The UTeach program, by design, supports a student-centered learning and teaching environment. Since UTeach will be the only method of preparing STEM teachers in the RGV, it is necessary to train in-service teachers in inquiry- and project-based learning and teaching methodologies. There is a need for qualified educators in our school districts to mentor our UTeach students. Consequently, there is great need to have teacher training workshops to enhance mentoring skills. UTeach will take a leadership role in seeking funding to provide this training for current classroom teachers. Plans are to provide two intensive workshops each semester, fall and spring, and one workshop in August before the beginning of the academic school year. These half-day Saturday workshops, or possibly full-day sessions during the week, will be conducted at the beginning of each semester with a follow-up workshop towards the end of each semester. These mentors will be trained on all reporting and mentoring requirements of the UTeach program which will occur in the August workshop. In addition, they will receive training on developing inquiry- and project-based lessons which they can implement in their regular classrooms. Expectations are for these trained mentors to transition from a teacher-centered classroom to a student-centered environment. Another important component of the workshops will be to train teachers in providing constructive feedback to UTeach students. Also, these UTeach mentors could become leaders in their schools in training other teachers in a student-centered learning environment. They could easily become recruiters of other mentor teachers for our program. These mentors need to be experience, high quality teachers who are open to different pedagogical methods. They will be recruited by using regional and district contacts, university mathematics and science faculty, principals, and direct contact with teachers. The UTeach program will have a leading role in training current teachers as well as assist with the necessary paperwork in order for them to receive continuing education credit.

Since UTeach will graduate the first three high quality STEM teachers in May 2014, there is a need for induction services for these graduates. Induction support will be provided to UTeach graduates during the first two years of teaching. These services include mentoring, the use of curriculum materials, the use of program technology, and professional assistance by clinical and program faculty. In addition, Teach For America-RGV is open to collaborating with UTeach in providing induction services.

The UTeach program is collaboration between the College of Science and Mathematics and the College of Education. Also, it collaborates with the various STEM departments and the College of Engineering. The UTeach working group is planning on expansion of the program to all four RGV counties. There are plans to collaborate with area community colleges to have courses taught by program clinical faculty at their respective campuses. Agreement has already been signed with South Texas College to offer Step 1 and Step 2 UTeach courses at the STC Pecan campus. Agreements will be sought with Texas Southmost College and Texas State Technical College to offer classes at their campuses. Thus, by design UTeach is trans-disciplinary involving various collaborations.

UTeach at UTB and UTPA are currently housed in the Colleges of Science and Mathematics in collaboration with the Colleges of Education. UTeach will be the only STEM teacher preparation program in the RGV; thus, it is essential to phase out the traditional program as per agreement for the

implementation of the program. UTB will phase out the traditional program at the end of the 2014 spring semester and UTPA will do likewise within the next two years. Therefore, the group recommends that UTRGV continue replicating this highly successful UTeach model with high fidelity.

The UTeach Working Group is keenly aware and sensitive to the cultural roots of South Texas. Contributions from all groups are part of the UTeach courses at the content and pedagogy level. The group is supportive of the idea of a bilingual, bicultural, and bilateral university and is ready to meet the challenges of transforming the STEM educational (and general education) landscape of the RGV in order for our graduates to compete and be successful in today's modern technological world.

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