

Office of Global Engagement

Newsletter

2016 – 2017

Welcome from the Associate Provost

Welcome to the first annual newsletter from the Office of Global Engagement. OGE assists The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to globalize by identifying, creating, and supporting international initiatives while opening a range of opportunities for the faculty, students, the community, and senior leadership. OGE provides vision, logistics, funding, and other support to help UTRGV realize its global strategic priorities.

The Office of Global Engagement came into being on September 1, 2015. Since then, OGE has worked with faculty, students, staff, and community members to help globalize our university and the Rio Grande Valley.

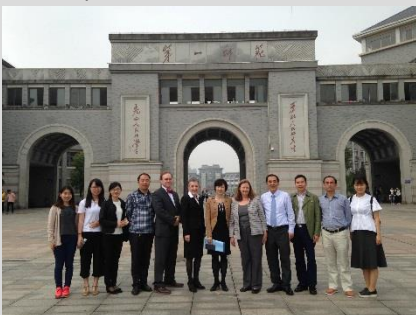
OGE has contributed and joined in numerous cultural events, held academic conferences on international themes, sent students abroad to learn, welcomed students from overseas to study here at UTRGV, hosted visiting scholars who conduct joint research with our faculty members, provided grants and support for research, and helped increase our international profile and reputation through official agreements and travel.

Who we are

Our mission:

OGE advances knowledge, research, and learning that promote the common good. We contribute to the academic and cultural environments of UTRGV through the movement of people and ideas across borders. We support our faculty, staff, and students to become effective global leaders who will create a more just global society.

- The Office of Global Engagement supports and promotes globalization throughout UTRGV;
- OGE helps write globalization into UTRGV's Strategic Plan;
- OGE guides and supports IASS, IPP, and LI;
- OGE increases awareness of global initiatives;
- OGE serves as central location for information on UTRGV global items; and
- OGE provides services and support so UTRGV will become a global university.



OGE Leadership and Staff



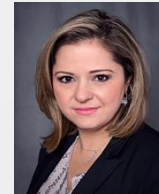
Dr. Dennis Hart
Associate Provost



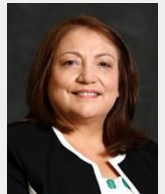
Rachel Berner
Administrative Associate



Alan Earhart
Director of International
Programs & Partnerships



Samantha Lopez
Director of
International Admissions
& Students Services



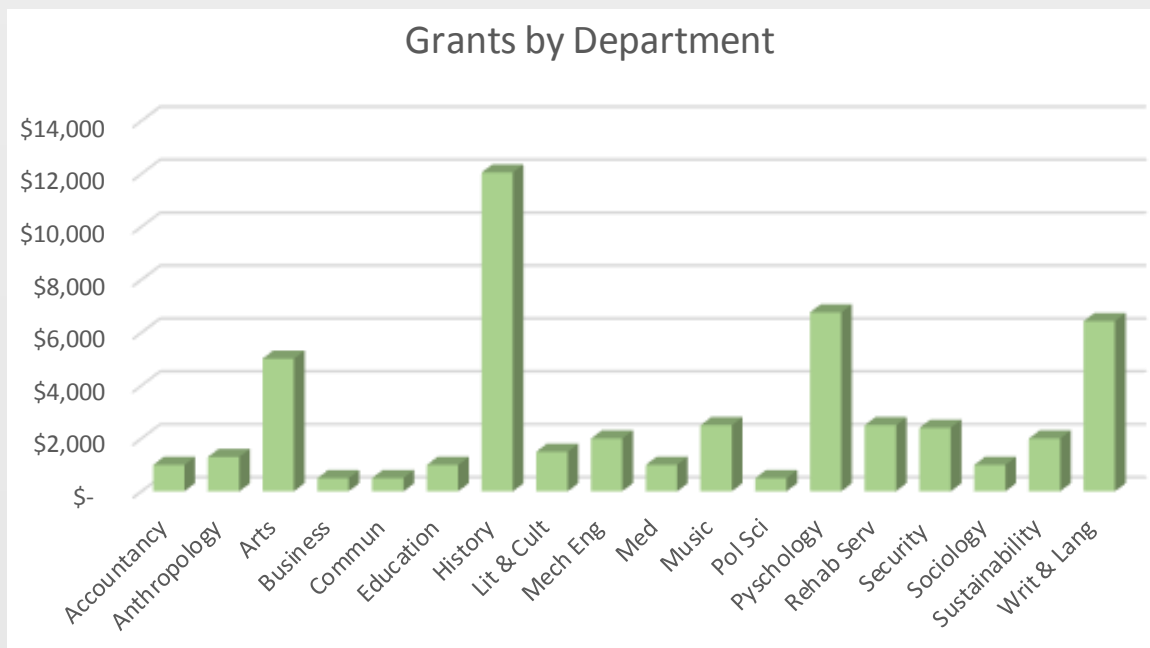
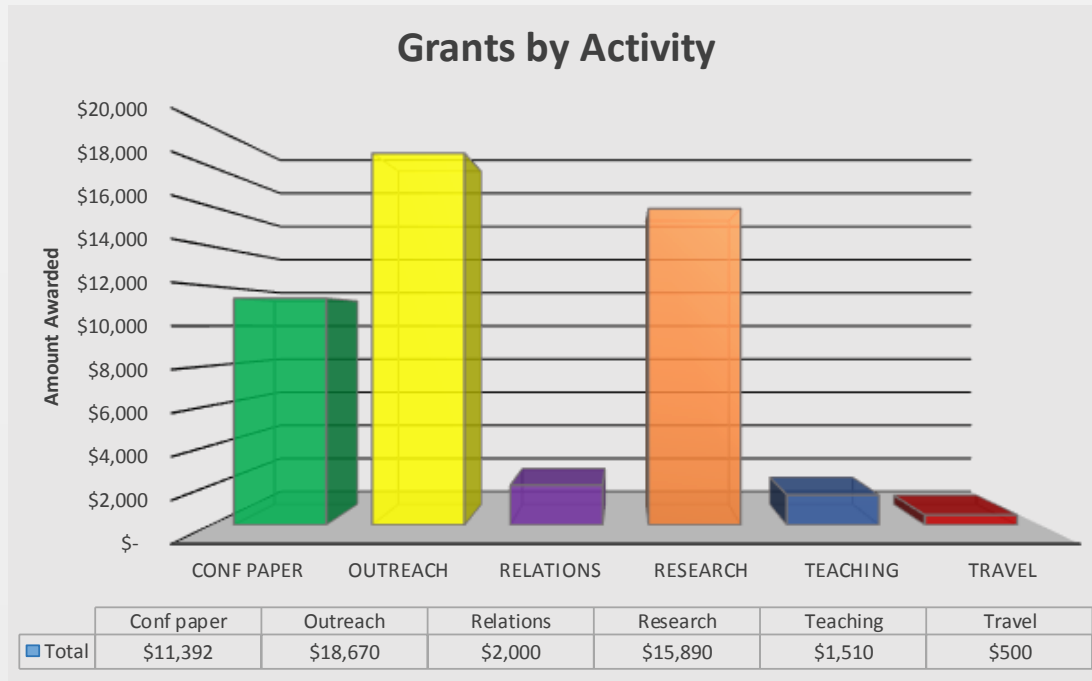
Norma Ramos
Director of
Language Institute

What we do

- Create study abroad and international exchange experiences for all of our students;
- Recruit, advise, and manage visas for our international students (F-1, J-1, and more);
- Provide world-class language education courses, particularly in ESL;
- Oversee strategic partnerships and institutional affiliations throughout the world;
- Actively recruit and support international scholars to engage in joint research projects;
- Author and provide support for global workshops and conferences;
- Provide hands-on experience to international students through curricular internships and professional development;
- Offer strong support systems and services to our international student population (counseling, immigration & academic advisement, student health services, intercampus transportation, student residence, student rights and responsibilities, tutoring and much more);
- Enrich the campus and community through an array of cultural events and speakers;
- Provide funding and other support for research, travel, and publications; and
- To achieve all of the above, OGE houses and supports International Admissions and Student Services, International Partnerships and Programs, and the Language Institute.

Office of Global Engagement

Faculty Grants Awarded by OGE 2016-2017



Office of Global Engagement

Recent Faculty Activities Funded and Supported by OGE

- Professors **Mijin Oh** and **Minhee Eom**, Writing and Language Studies, used Korean farmer musical instruments to demonstrate traditional music to the UTRGV community.
- Associate Professor **Kristine Wirtz**, UTRGV History Department, traveled to France and Switzerland and conducted research on her book project titled: *The Peddler: The Trials and Tribulations of Jean Giraud and his Religious Community, 1670 - 1705*.
- **Dr. Alfonso Mercado** in Psychological Science conducted a research project titled: "New Questions for the Hispanic Health Paradox: Investigating the Roles of Cultural Values and Trauma in the Immigrant Population."
- **David Sadlier**, Assistant Professor of Music, joined the faculty of the Academia Europea dell'Opera in Lucca, Italy.
- **Dr. D Elizabeth Turner** presented her paper titled: "Liability of Foreignness: The impact of Elimination of the Reconciliation Requirement on International Asset Allocation by US Investors" at the Journal of International Accounting Research Conference in Australia.
- Associate Professor **Amy Hay**, History Department, with the International Center for Sustainability Across the Curriculum (ICSAC), helped to lead the faculty development workshop titled "Infusing Education for Sustainable Development into University Academics, Research, and Engagement through Faculty Training Programs."
- **Dr. Noe Vargas** (Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering and Computer Science) along with the Offices for Sustainability and Global Engagement presented Earth Fest 2017.
- Assistant Professors **Bonnie Lucero** and **Jamie Starling** led *Global Latin America*, an interdisciplinary lecture and engagement series on the African diasporic, indigenous, and Asian influences in Latin American and its border lands.
- Associate Professor **Irving Levinson** of the UTRGV History Department presented his conference paper titled "The Other Nationalization: Lazaro Cardenas's Nationalization of Mexico's Railroad." in Campeche, Mexico.
- Associate Professor **Scott Roeder** of the School of Music hosted the 2017 South Central Regional Tuba/Euphonium Conference at the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex.
- Associate Professor **Marci McMahon**, Literatures and Cultural Studies, presented her paper titled "(Re) Sounding Las Américas: Listening to Transnational Latina/o Theater" at the 25th Annual Festival of Original Theatre (FOOT) in Toronto.
- Professor **Sibin Wu** of the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship traveled to Shandong Jianzhu University in Jinan, China and met with their President to discuss potential collaborations between UTRGV and SJU.

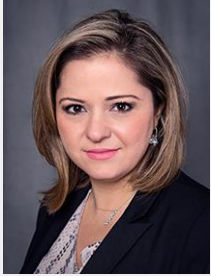
Events sponsored by OGE

- International Meet and Greet
- International Education Week
- Multi Lingua Fest, Dr. Minhee Eom
- Border Studies Conference in Brownsville and Matamoros, Mexico.
- Border Health Conference in Edinburg, Dr. Bea Tapias
- Earthfest, w/Sustainability, Ms. Marianella Franklin
- Lunar New Year/Asian Cultural Show, Professor Mijin Oh
- Community of Scholars, J1 scholar lunch
- Global Latin America Lecture Series, Dr. Bonnie Lucero
- Model United Nations trip to NYC & UN. Dr. Michelle Keck
- Sahmyook University Program, Dr. Soojin Yoo



International Admissions & Student Services

Welcome by IASS Director



Samantha Lopez
Director

International students are an essential part of our community and culture at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). Their background, perspective, experiences, goals, and dreams strengthen our university as a whole and make everyone's learning experience richer.

We understand that the international student population has a very distinct set of needs. IASS has a committed and dedicated staff at both campuses to provide them with strong support services, information, and guidance they need throughout their study at UTRGV.

IASS Services

The mission of the Office of the International Admissions and Student Services is to provide support to our UTRGV international student population.

Our services include:

Advising on international admissions requirements from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Conducting orientation and cultural events to help our international students to integrate and adjust to the new academic, cultural, and social life at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

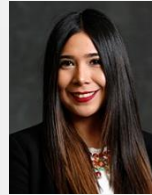
Serving as a liaison with our U.S. governmental agencies, U.S. Consulates, and sponsors that support international student education.

Connecting our international student population with the community, volunteer programs, student organizations, and campus services available to them.

IASS Mission

The mission of International Student and Admissions Services is to nurture and develop international students by providing a top quality education and enhance their personal and professional development skills in a diverse and safe environment. Our aim is for our international students to become transformative leaders – agents of change throughout the world.

IASS Team



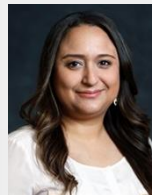
Erika Carrizales
Administrative
Coordinator



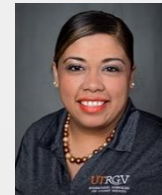
Carlos Rios
Assistant Director



Jessica Cantu
International
Admissions Specialist



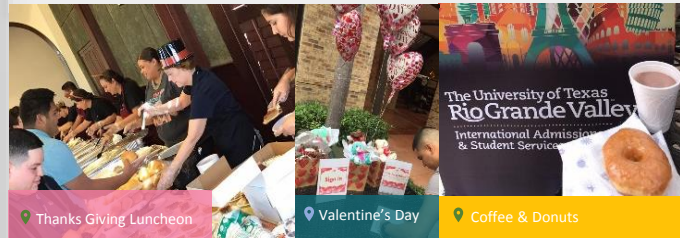
Nora Cruz Dole
Senior International
Student Advisor



Nellie Leyva
International
Student Advisor



Grisel Portilla
International
Student Advisor



IASS Team Achievements

Improved office efficiency
IASS has scanned over
1,000 student files into
image-now

Conducted top quality cultural
events, and other support as
needed to help our international
students to integrate into the
academic, cultural, and social
life at UTRGV.

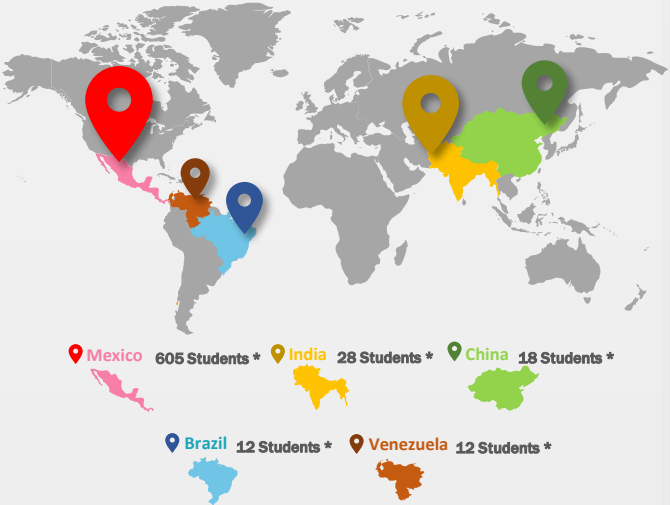
IASS has increased international student
engagement activities sponsored by IASS and
successful collaboration with faculty,
departments, and campus and external
organizations.

IASS has been able to secure
funding for international
student scholarships by
working collaborate with
other agencies, grants, and
UTRGV internal student
funding.

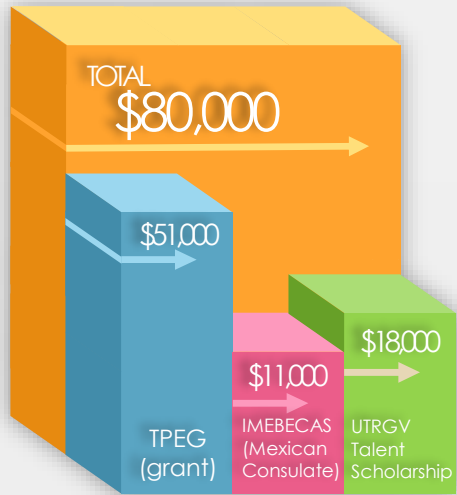
IASS is currently using a
google analytics to monitor
the traffic on our webpages

International Admissions & Student Services

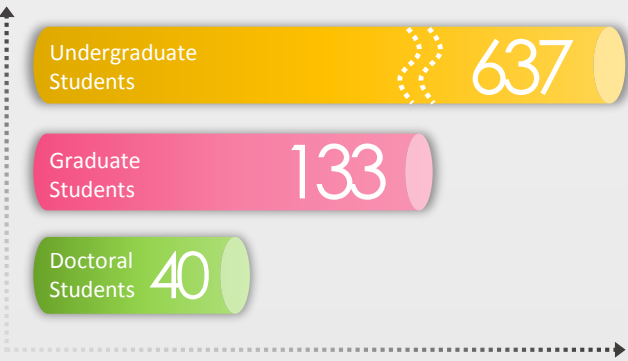
Top 5 Places of Origin



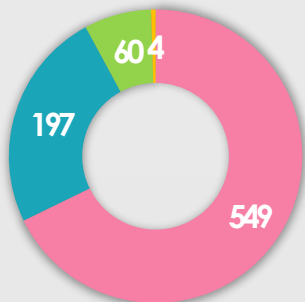
Scholarships Awarded to International Students



Academic Level



Enrollment by Campus



- Edinburg
- Brownsville
- Brownsville & Edinburg
- Other

IASS Accomplishments

- IASS provided services to international students on 3,467 separate occasions from Sept. 2016 – April 2017, at both campus locations.
 - IASS had **220** international graduates for Fall & Spring.
 - IASS successfully processed **297** OPT applications with USCIS.
 - IASS processed **323** employment authorization forms.
- IASS held the following workshops at both campus locations.**
- A comprehensive International Student Orientation (graduate and undergraduate)
 - Curricular Practical Trainings
 - Optional Practical Trainings
 - Employment Options after Graduation by an immigration attorney.
 - AHP Insurance Coverage Information Workshop
- IASS was able to nominate 14 UTRGV international student applications to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Four students from UTRGV were selected to receive a full year of free tuition. **This award will total to: \$22,202.** The award will be given to students FY -17-18 academic year.
 - IASS supported the creation of the Association for International Students (AIS) at UTRGV. This is departmental sponsored organization. Grisel Portilla, International Student Advisor was chosen as the Advisor's organization.



International Programs & Partnerships

Welcome by IPP Director



Alan Earhart
Director

International Programs and Partnerships has overcome some daunting challenges this year to set a new record for student participation in study abroad programming. The office started the year with four out of five positions being held by new employees including myself as the new director. I challenged the team to think creatively and to be proactive. At times it felt as if we were running ahead of a tsunami as we created new procedures and accomplished our

primary tasks all while learning our new roles within the office and the university. The success of this first year gives all of us a tremendous amount of pride for what we achieved and hope for what we will be able to do this coming year. In addition to study abroad programming we also served the UTRGV community by managing agreements with partner institutions abroad and by administering the J-1 exchange visitor program.

IPP Services

The mission of International Programs and Partnerships enhances the internationalization of the UTRGV community.

STUDY ABROAD

UTRGV students enroll in Vaqueros Study Abroad programs led by our own UTRGV faculty. These programs are a few weeks in length and offer students the chance to experience a new culture with the close support of fellow UTRGV students and a faculty member. Through exchange agreements with partner institutions abroad UTRGV students also enroll directly in courses at a university abroad for a semester or longer. Finally, UTRGV students can also attend study abroad programs managed by third-party entities.

AGREEMENTS OF COOPERATION

Schools and Departments conducting research or academic exchanges with institutions abroad rely on International Programs and Partnerships to provide support and guidance on the establishment of Agreements of Cooperation. We have the experience and knowledge to complete this legal process in compliance with established institutional norms.

VISITING SCHOLARS

International Programs and Partnerships provides US immigration leadership for obtaining J1 visas for international scholars conducting research with Schools and Departments at UTRGV. We also facilitate the integration of these scholars into the campus community through logistics support and event planning.

IPP Team



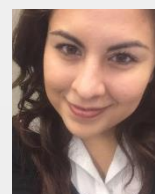
Luis Alcocer
International
Programs Specialist



Andres Altamirano
Administrative
Coordinator



Gaspar Garcia
International
Programs Specialist



Lizette Leal
International
Programs Specialist

IPP Mission

The mission of International Programs and Partnerships is to serve the UTRGV community in its internationalization efforts through developing exchanges with partner institutions overseas. We create high-impact learning opportunities abroad for UTRGV students and faculty. We also serve visiting scholars and researchers by providing assistance for immigration and integration into the campus community.

IPP Team Achievements

Awarded

\$87,308

IEF Scholarship



\$142,000

IWB Scholarship



Received

\$41,000

Gilman Int. Scholarship



● 2015-2016
170 Study Abroad Students

● 2016-2017
223 Study Abroad Students

International Programs & Partnerships

Study Abroad 2017

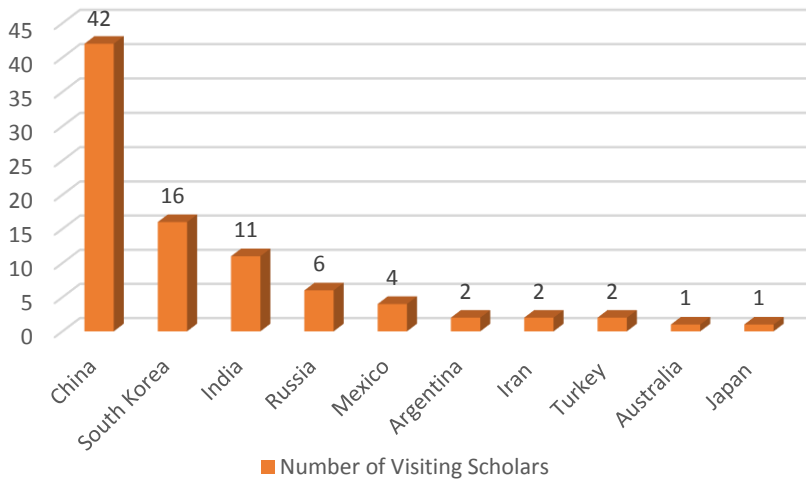


MOU's 2016-2017

- 1) Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University (Thailand), Signed 10/21/2016 exp. 2019
- 2) Universidad Autonoma de Baja California (Mexico), Signed 11/08/2016, exp. 2019
- 3) CIDESI (Mexico), signed 11/10/2016 exp. 2019
- 4) Sahmyook University (South Korea), signed 2/05/2017 exp. 2020
- 5) Hunan First Normal University (China), signed 5/1/2017 exp. 2020
- 6) Soonchunhyang University (South Korea), signed 5/13/2017 exp. 2020
- 7) Shandong Jianzhu University (China), Signed 4/26/2017 exp.2020



Visiting Scholars



Agreements by Country

Country	Number of Agreements
Argentina	1
Australia	1
Austria	1
Brazil	2
Canada	1
Chile	5
China	4
Colombia	2
Cuba	1
France	6
Germany	1
Ireland	1
Kazakhstan	1
Mexico	9
Morocco	2
Poland	1
Romania	2
Russia	4
South Korea	4
Spain	3
Switzerland	1
Thailand	2
Turkey	1
United Kingdom	1
Uruguay	1
	58



Language Institute

Welcome by LI Director



Norma Ramos
Director

Dear Friends,

Looking back on the past year, I am extremely proud of all of our students who have demonstrated growth and advancement through their experience at the Language Institute this year.

I also can't help but be inspired by my great staff. In spite of difficult economic times, we were fortunate to have had a great year full of meaningful hard work and motivation. Together we are making

a positive impact in student's lives. As so much of our work this year has shown, we work best when we work together.

LI Mission

The Language Institute provides English and other language instruction to students, professionals, and the community; enhances students' ability to participate and integrate successfully in the American culture; and academically prepares students to pursue a degree at an American university. The Language Institute is committed to achieve this mission by continuously enhancing the quality of our service and constantly innovating teaching methodologies. We are dedicated to helping students fulfill academic, professional and personal goals.

LI Programs

Intensive Program:

The Language Institute offers five intensive (eight week) English programs every year at our Edinburg and Brownsville sites. Ten levels of English are available from Basic to Advanced.

Saturday Program:

The Language Institute offers four semi-intensive (twelve week) English programs, on Saturdays, every year at our Edinburg and Brownsville sites. Ten levels of English are available from Basic to High Advanced. The semi-intensive program also offers several elective levels in TOEFL Preparation, Listening/Speaking, Conversation, Reading & Writing, Pronunciation and Business English.

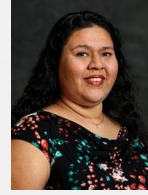
Special Summer Program:

The Language Institute offers a Special 3 week Summer Program for students 15 years or older.

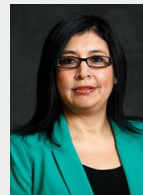
LI Team



Lorena Carrizales
Office
Assistant



Monica Arguello
Office
Assistant



Erika T. Garcia
Administrative
Assistant



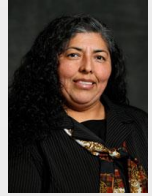
Luis G. Garcia
Administrative
Assistant



Roman R. Sanchez
Systems
Analyst



Hilda Tamen
Learning Instruction
Specialist



Blanca E. Duarte
Learning Instruction
Specialist

LI Accomplishments

Intensive
Students

465

Saturday
Students

447

- Enrolled **912** international students in 2017.
- Served over **1,950** international students.
- Held **9** Intensive and Saturday Program New Student Orientations
- Processed **578** F-1 Visas
- Advised **290** Students.

Language Institute

Places of Origin

- USA
- Mexico
- Vietnam
- Colombia
- China
- Korea
- Venezuela
- Turkey
- Japan
- Bolivia
- Cuba
- Panama
- Brazil
- Peru
- Burkina Faso
- Puerto Rico
- Argentina
- Cameroon
- El Salvador
- Russia
- Philippines
- Taiwan
- Poland
- Bangladesh
- Pakistan
- Honduras
- Libya
- Rwanda
- Iran



LI Student Testimonials



"I like the English Institute because it is an intensive program that helps students to learn English and to be prepared to go to the University. I think this institute is the most helpful program that I have ever heard of because the students really learn English. In my case, I have learned a lot. At the beginning I did not speak a single word at all. All the teachers here are very helpful. They are always encouraging us to speak, write, read, and listen only in English. My family always says that I am learning a lot, and it is true. Even my teachers notice how much I am improving. I really appreciate the teachers' help."

Betsaida, Michoacan, Mexico



"I started studying here since October 24, 2016. Before I started studying here, I was not able to express myself in English. I could not even understand people. Since I am African, people have always been curious to know more about me and my culture so that led me to start interacting a lot with my classmates and teachers. I have been able to practice as much as I can. I have met wonderful teachers who are really patient and helpful. Nowadays, people whom I first met when I came to the Language Institute always tell me that I have been improving my speaking a lot. I am so glad for that, and I will keep on working on it in order to be able to speak fluently and write well academically. Studying at the Language Institute has been a great experience for me, and I will always remember it."

Yacinthe, Burkina Faso, West Africa



"My experience at the UTRGV Language Institute has been wonderful. I have been studying English here for almost four months. At the beginning, it was difficult because I did not understand many things. Now I know that my English is better because I understand more than I used to. When I go to any store or talk to someone, I feel that I understand more, and they understand me better too. Some of the words that we learned in class are difficult to apply daily. When I have the opportunity, I use them."

Rocio, Veracruz, Mexico

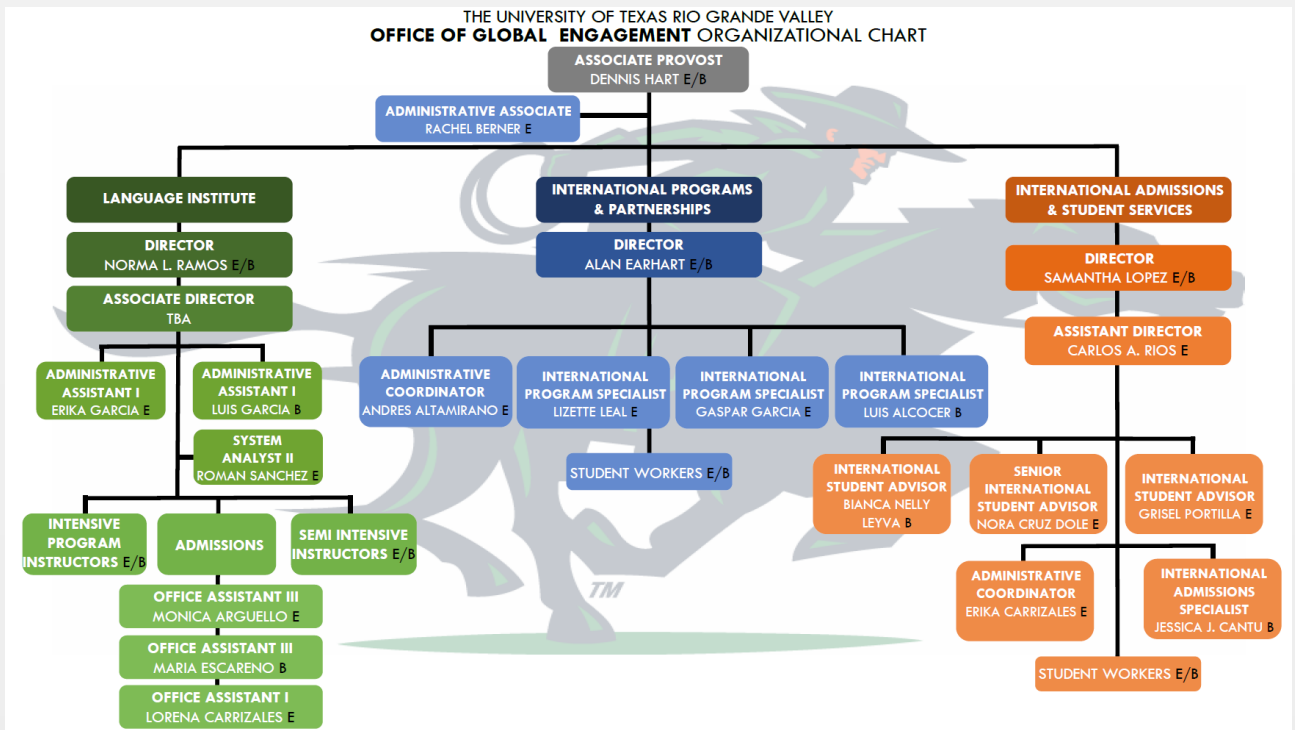


"My experience at the UTRGV Language Institute has been unforgettable. When I was a child, I hated English with my entire heart, but my experience here has been so great. UTRGV-LI's outstanding teachers have taught me that English is not difficult, and I have learned a lot. I have noticed that my writing has improved little by little, and this is very important for me. The way that you communicate in writing says a lot about you. In 10 months, my husband has noticed my improvement in speaking and listening in English. When we watch an American movie, I can understand almost everything. I need to say thanks to the UTRGV-LI and the teachers for their patience and dedication."

Laura, Colombia



OGE Organizational Chart



Contact us

Office of Global Engagement

Brownsville Campus: MAIN Bldg. 1.308

Edinburg Campus: STAC Bldg. 3.128

Email: OGE@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 882-7092 or (956) 665-2922

Phone Alt: 1-888-882-4026

Fax: (956) 665-2281

International Admissions and Student Services

Brownsville Campus: MAIN Bldg. 1.308

Edinburg Campus: STAC Bldg. 3.128

Email: international@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 882-7092 or (956) 665-2922

Phone Alt: 1-888-882-4026

Fax: (956) 665-2281

International Programs and Partnerships

Edinburg Campus: STAC 3.128

Brownsville Campus: MAIN 1.308

Email: ipp@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 665-3572

Phone Alt: (956) 882-8955

Brownsville Fax: (956) 665-2281

Language Institute

Edinburg Campus: 1407 E. Freddy Gonzalez CESS Bldg., Rm. 1.700

Edinburg, TX 78539-2999

Email: li@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 665-2133

Fax: (956) 665-5001

Brownsville Campus: 1601 E. Price Rd. Ste. "E" Resaca Village Plaza

Brownsville, TX 78521

Email: brli@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 882-4178

Fax: (956) 882-4182