



## **FACULTY WORKING GROUP**

February 16, 2016

9:30-11:00

RAHC-Harlingen, Room 1.100

### **Issues/Concerns and Recommendations Regarding Processes that Impact Teaching, Research/Scholarship, and/or Service**

**Purpose:** The goal of this meeting was to focus on the strategic planning process for UTRGV and to examine the guiding principles, provisional mission statement, and the core priorities. We also discussed challenges and opportunities that the strategic planning process presents.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

- Should be encouraging STEAM (including the Arts) instead of STEM.
- Some principles are interconnected and could be clustered into categories, thus reducing the actual number of guiding principles.
  - For example, “applied translational research,” “inventions and intellectual property,” and “innovation with knowledge discovery” can be combined into one broad category.
  - “Gateway to the Americas” and “Global Leader” can also be combined.
  - “STEM and Health Programs” and “Medical Education” can form one category.
  - Community partnerships/engagement is a critical component that needs to be highlighted.
  - Communication is also an important component that should be part of the guiding principles.
- What makes us unique? How will UTRGV differentiate itself from other universities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? How do we capitalize on our location? Environment? Regional strengths? Examples:
  - The Gateway to the Americas and Globalization.

- UTRGV is a microcosm of what the U.S. will be in the future.
- Bi-literal, Bicultural, and Bilingual: This is an extremely important topic for discussion for UTRGV. Close to 90% of the population in the RGV is Hispanic, and the Hispanic population is one of the fastest growing demographic groups in the U.S. Further, Spanish is one of the languages that is most quickly expanding in the U.S. UTRGV has an opportunity to have an impact in this particular area and can differentiate itself from other universities across the country. Others argued the importance of becoming a “multicultural” university and preparing our students for success in a multi-cultural world.
- We have an opportunity to become a land, sea, and space-grant institution; we already have or will have many of the elements associated with these types of institutions. UTRGV is in one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country; it is adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico with a strong marine science/coastal studies program; and it can develop a strong aerospace program with a formal partnership with SpaceX.
- Strive toward organizational excellence. How do we create a university such that everyone (e.g., faculty, staff, and students) is eager to get to work and/or attend classes? How do we create a sense of community and encourage a sense of belonging? How do we ensure that our processes are streamlined and transparent?
- We need to continue focusing on the retention of faculty.

**Core Priorities:**

- **Research on the Issues of the RGV**

- Emphasize global impact.
- We should focus on broad areas of research; this priority should not necessarily focus on “issues”.
- The focus on the RGV could present us as a “regional” University rather than a national emerging research institution.

- **Medical Education**

- Narrowly defined; should be more broadly defined or more encompassing to include other health areas; focus should be on health and well-being.

- **What could be the 5<sup>th</sup> Core Priority?**
  - Civic/Community Engagement
  - “Livability”
  - Research RGV Communities (instead of issues)
  - Economic Development
  - Transformational Outcome
  - Careers
  - Creativity and Leadership
  - Innovation
  - Impact
  - Environment of Collaboration/Faculty moral
  - Multicultural/Multilingual
  - Interdisciplinary
  - Networking

## **Mission Statement:**

- Change “commercialization” to “transform” or “entrepreneurial.” UTRGV has an opportunity to demonstrate student success through "economic development."
- Need to emphasize the need, importance, and impact of ongoing communication.
- We can demonstrate to the country how to be successful in many ways; relevant for the 21<sup>st</sup> century without being mired in traditional university mindsets; we can become the top HSI and Emerging Research University in the U.S.

## **Word Cloud:**

- Missing Concepts:
  - Globalization
  - Faculty buy-in
- As a University, we need to think about how to develop “Research Goals & Metrics,” but we also need to focus on “Uniting the Distributed Campus.” How do we identify research priorities, develop research infrastructure, build research collaborations, optimize research space utilization, offer research opportunities to students, and provide efficient research administrative services, all without unnecessary duplication, in a geographically distributed setting?

- We must keep in mind that the University will never have sufficient resources to duplicate research programs; we have to focus on developing specific research clusters in each of the regions that constitutes UTRGV.

**Regarding the Strategic Plan:**

- Include collaborative examples.
- Include space utilization so faculty know we are actively working on this matter.
- Specifically state we will increase faculty engagement and/or initiatives to engage faculty and staff.
- Show “bottom up” approach.
- Acknowledge that the US is changing and that the need to increase the number of Spanish speakers is critical.
- Recognize that many students want to stay close to home.
- Identify we are a gateway to the Americas via the north and south.
- Make B3 a long-term goal.
- Need to focus on milestones and measurable outcomes; need to develop a structure to measure progress.
- Actively market and engage our 60% female student population.

**Inhibitors:**

- Lack of adequate communication due to IT issues between campuses. The distributed campus complicates the communication process in several dimensions.
- Information validation, “check it out before you shout it out.”