

**From:** Office of the Vice President for Student Success [<mailto:studentsuccess@UTRGV.EDU>]

**Sent:** Thursday, December 03, 2015 10:34 AM

**To:** [EMPLOYEES@LISTSERV.UTRGV.EDU](mailto:EMPLOYEES@LISTSERV.UTRGV.EDU)

**Subject:** Student Success Highlights -- Commencement, Catalogs, and More



As we enter the fourth month of UTRGV, I thought it would be a good time to share some highlights from Student Success. Below are selected highlights and updates, some upcoming calendar items, and responses to a few questions we've recently received. We'll be sending highlights every few weeks. If you have questions you can't find the answer to, please let us know at [studentsuccess@utrgv.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@utrgv.edu) and we'll find an answer for you!

Thank you for all that you do to support our UTRGV students!

*Kristin Croyle*

Vice President for Student Success

## Highlights

- **Commencement**

We are excited for our first UTRGV commencement! Three ceremonies have been scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 19, 2015, and will include the traditional pomp and circumstance of graduation ceremonies, with the addition of new traditions for our new institution. Please join us as we honor our first group of approximately 2000 UTRGV graduates. Additional details regarding the commencement ceremony and the full schedule are available [here](#). General information about applying for graduation, regalia, graduation fees, etc. is available [here](#). Eligible students have already been notified via email, including the scheduled time and location of their ceremony. Faculty are welcome to attend either the ceremony in Hidalgo scheduled for their college or the ceremony in Brownsville. Staff are very welcome to volunteer at any ceremony! A call for volunteers will be sent out within the next few days.

- **VLink**

Do you have students looking for service or leadership opportunities? Send them to VLink! VLink ([utrgv.edu/vlink](http://utrgv.edu/vlink)) is an online community building tool for students and their organizations. Students who are looking for an opportunity to connect can use VLink to find events and organizations that match their interests. There's something for everyone among our 300+ UTRGV student organizations. Student

organizations can announce their events and organize service and other activities through VLink. For questions about VLink, contact Student Involvement at [involvement@utrgv.edu](mailto:involvement@utrgv.edu).

- **Academic Internships Initiative**

Student Academic Success is coordinating work to create a stronger support structure for academic internships for students at UTRGV. We know that students' internships often bring to life what they are learning in the classroom in a new way, help to solidify their career direction, and may provide entry into their first professional jobs. Thank you to the Career Center, Engaged Scholarship and Learning, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the Developing Hispanic Institutions grant (Title V) for providing important support of this initiative. And thank you to our faculty who have stepped forward to design or improve internship courses as part of the Title V work and to Drs. Peg Graham and Russell Adams who are leading that effort.

- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service**

Faculty, staff, students and our friends and families are all encouraged to join us in making the RGV a stronger community on January 18. We are hoping to field over 1000 volunteers in service projects across the Valley. If you or your students are interested in participating, please register by December 10. Site leaders are also very welcome. Click [here](#) for more information or contact [volunteer@utrgv.edu](mailto:volunteer@utrgv.edu).

- **24-Hour Crisis Line**

UTRGV Counseling Center now has its own 24/7 helpline for students in emotional crisis. Students can call 956-665-5555, any day of the week, any hour of the day – even on holidays and weekends. Student callers will be connected with a trained counselor who can assist.

- **UTRGV Catalogs**

The UTRGV Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs have been finalized and posted [online](#). Current degree requirements, academic policies, and course descriptions are found there. For example, grading policies including GPA calculation and use of “straight grades” (no pluses and minuses) is detailed on page 66 of the Undergraduate Catalog and policies covering students requesting to audit courses are found on page 72. Thank you to the faculty and staff who contributed many many hours to prepare the policies, curriculum, and catalog drafts!

## Calendar Items

December 9 (11:59 p.m.)	Student course evaluations close
December 10	Study Day – Thursday only
December 11-17	<a href="#">Final Exams</a>
December 18 (3:00 p.m.)	Grades Due
December 19	<a href="#">Commencement</a>
January 18	<a href="#">MLK Day of Service</a>
January 19	First Day of Classes for Spring 2016
January 18-22	Week of Welcome (multiple student events)

## Questions Raised this Week

- **When are grades due?**

Faculty should submit grades through ASSIST by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, December 18. We appreciate faculty submitting grades on time! Student Enrollment will then process the grades, determine potential effects on

financial aid for students who are not making academic progress, and complete NCAA certification in time to notify students before the holiday break.

- **Where can I find the full Academic Calendar?**

The full Academic Calendar is posted [here](#). You can also reach it by going to [my.utrgv.edu](http://my.utrgv.edu) and scrolling down to the “Resources” list before you log in. There are also resources there such as the Final Exam scheduled and the publicly available course schedule.

- **Why are there more classes offered in Edinburg than in Brownsville?**

Course offerings are primarily determined by student demand. Since there are more students taking classes in Edinburg than in Brownsville, there are more classes offered in Edinburg than in Brownsville. In a comparison between the upcoming Spring 2016 course schedule and the Spring 2015 course schedule from UTB, there are more face to face undergraduate courses being offered in Brownsville this coming semester than in the past and more online courses being offered between the two campuses than in the previous year. However meeting student needs for progress on their degrees and for graduation is always a concern and is both a university-wide issue and an issue specific to each degree program. Our department chairs are working hard to make sure that the specific courses students need are offered in each location. Students who are concerned that courses they need are not being offered are encouraged to contact their departments. Contact information for each department is listed in the “Colleges” section of the [UTRGV webpage](#) and in the UTRGV [departmental directory](#).