



8/26/2026

Dear Faculty,

First day of classes! Wishing all of us a great academic year, with a strong start and an even stronger finish.

Thank you for everything you do for our students, our university, and our community. As I have highlighted in my [AIM Framework](#), you are the principal value creators in the educational enterprise.

A few reminders as the semester begins:

1. Syllabus

Your syllabus is our institutional commitment to students about what we will deliver. Please make sure it accurately conveys course content and scope using terminology from your field and emphasizes knowledge-oriented analytic exploration and open intellectual inquiry, centered on the academic questions and analytical approaches core to your discipline.

Syllabi should be developed through the Simple Syllabus link on Brightspace so students understand your expectations from day one. For a quick introduction, watch the [UTRGV Simple Syllabus Introduction Video](#), and see the [How-To Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

2. New Course Scheduling Grid

Beginning Fall 2027, UTRGV will move from the current [MW/TR/F pattern](#) to a new standard grid: Monday/Wednesday/Friday (MWF) and Tuesday/Thursday (TR). This reflects the recommendations of the AY 2025–2026 Class Schedule Working Group, which found that our current model underuses classroom space on Fridays while overloading it earlier in the week, limiting our ability to add sections during peak demand and constraining student access to required courses. Distributing instruction more evenly will expand seat

capacity and give students more consistent access to the courses they need for timely degree completion. Questions may be directed to [Dr. Jonikka Charlton](#).

3. 9-Month Faculty Appointments

The Memorandum of Appointment (MOA) for a 9-month faculty position outlines workload assignments and salary, paid over the standard academic-year period of September 1 through May 31. This period is designed to cover the full scope of instructional duties, even though the academic calendar doesn't align exactly with these dates. For example, in AY 2026–2027, classes begin August 26, 2026 (almost one week before the September 1 start) and grades are due May 17, 2027, two weeks ahead of the May 31 end date. The 9-month salary covers this entire span of work. Questions related to 9-month faculty appointments may be directed to [Dr. Robert Dearth](#).

4. Research Seed Grants Program ([FORGE](#))

Faculty Opportunities for Research Growth and Excellence ([FORGE](#)) is a new Seed Grants program. FORGE supports innovative research and scholarship that advances the university's strategic research priorities while fostering a vibrant research culture across Academic Affairs and Health Affairs. FORGE is a competitive internal funding program that provides strategic investments to generate preliminary data, establish new collaborations, and position faculty teams for successful extramural grant applications and scholarly impact. Questions related to FORGE may be directed to [Dr. Megan Keniry](#).

5. Faculty Travel Program ([TRIP](#))

Travel Resources and Investments Program ([TRIP](#)) is designed to assist faculty with travel needs that align with the university's strategic research priorities. This funding opportunity aims to foster collaboration, support the development of competitive grant proposals, and enhance doctoral program recruitment. Questions related to TRIP may be directed to [Dr. Megan Keniry](#).

5. UTRGV Convocation

In the next few weeks, you will receive invitations to our UTRGV Convocation events:

- Monday, October 5, 2026, 2:30–4:00 PM in Edinburg
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026, 9:30–11:00 AM in Brownsville

I look forward to seeing you all there.

Here's to a semester full of great teaching, effective learning, and impactful research and discovery filled with success for both students and faculty!

V's Up,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Can Saygin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Can Saygin, PhD

Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Senior Vice President for Research

Dean of the Graduate College

Professor of Manufacturing and Industrial Engineering