

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley



Operationalizing the AIM Framework

Align • Integrate • Maximize

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So, Let's Begin...

This document describes how the **AIM Framework (Align • Integrate • Maximize)** is operationalized across UTRGV through a two-layer work group structure, that facilitates a project-management approach. Work Groups are organized around the lifecycle of each Success Pillar, carry a charter with defined initiatives, group members (faculty, staff, and students), group facilitators, timelines, and expected deliverables.

In this document, first, I introduce three success pillars: Faculty Success, Student Success, and Program Success. Each pillar contains associated lifecycle stages, ensuring that every AIM initiative can be situated within the appropriate stage and success pillar, founded on the AIM Principles for Academic Excellence.

Second, I describe a two-layer work group structure, comprising College Work Groups (CWGs) and Provost Work Groups (PWGs), through which these initiatives are developed, coordinated, and advanced in alignment with the success pillars.

Access **AIM Booklet** here:

<https://www.utrgv.edu/academicaffairs/files/documents/provost-vision-aim-framework-ay2026-2027-booklet.pdf>

1. Success Pillars

As shown in Figure 1, the AIM Framework rests on three Success Pillars: Faculty Success, Student Success, and Program Success. They together support the institution's overall impact. Success pillars are founded on the AIM Principles for Academic Excellence.

Every initiative identified under AIM's Seven Alignment Triangles is assigned to one of the three Success Pillars, and within that pillar, to a stage of the pillar's lifecycle. This places each initiative within a success pillar with a clear home and a relative position with respect to the other initiatives.

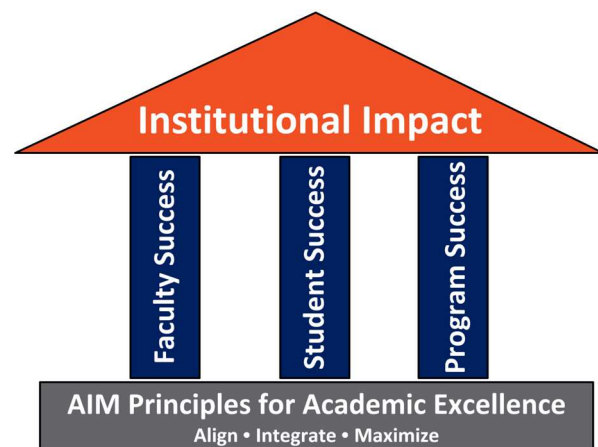


Figure 1. Institutional Impact rests on Faculty, Student, and Program Success, founded on AIM Principles

2. Principles for Academic Excellence (From Page 6 of [AIM Booklet](#))

1. **Faculty Success Enables Student Success:** Student Success is our ultimate goal, but it is not achievable without Faculty Success. Faculty appointments, workload expectations, and performance reviews must therefore reinforce one another, working together toward this single aim. Every faculty member should be able to see a direct line from their assigned responsibilities to the standards by which they are evaluated. When that line is clear, it builds fairness, accountability, and professional growth; this is the foundation on which faculty success, and in turn student success, is built.
2. **Faculty Expertise Should Align with Department:** Academic appointments should reflect the faculty member's disciplinary identity, scholarly expertise, and instructional responsibilities. When appointment and department are properly aligned, faculty are positioned to contribute at the highest level to their students, their departments, and the institution as a whole.
3. **Faculty Credentials Should Match Course and Program Assignments:** Faculty with the right credentials and experience should be assigned to the courses and academic programs that fit them. Faculty-Program fit should be reviewed regularly to ensure courses are delivered in a way that maximizes faculty effectiveness.
4. **Academic Programs and Structures Should Be Reviewed for Fit and Performance:** Academic programs should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis, against accreditation requirements, learning effectiveness indicators, and financial health metrics, frequently enough to allow timely intervention for quality improvement. Programs should be housed within organizational structures that best support collaboration, innovation, and responsiveness to workforce needs. Departments and colleges should exist because they create the strongest environment for program excellence, not simply because of historical organization.
5. **Curricula Should Be Intentionally Designed for Coherence:** Courses should be intentionally designed to collectively support concentrations, and concentrations should collectively strengthen the overall program. Every course should clearly contribute to student learning outcomes, timely graduation, career preparation, and long-term career success.
6. **Course Delivery Should Be Driven by Demand and Effectiveness:** The number of course sections and their delivery modality should be driven by actual student demand and learning effectiveness grounded in pedagogical principles, not by default, convenience, or precedent. Institutional teaching capacity, in the right form, should match real student need without wasting space, time, or effort.
7. **Scheduling Should Optimize the Full Student and Faculty Experience:** Course scheduling extends beyond assigning classrooms. It requires coordinating campus locations, instructional modalities, transportation, days, and times to improve classroom utilization, reduce scheduling conflicts, minimize student travel, increase faculty productivity, and shorten time-to-degree.

3. Lifecycle of Each Success Pillar

Rather than treating each Success Pillar as a single, undifferentiated area of work, this framework breaks each pillar into the recurring stages that its work naturally moves through. Framing the pillars as lifecycles, instead of static categories, makes it possible to place any initiative at the stage it actually addresses, track it through to completion, and identify where the institution's effort should be concentrated.

3.1 Faculty Success Lifecycle

Faculty Success spans the full arc of a faculty career, from recruitment through retirement or transition.

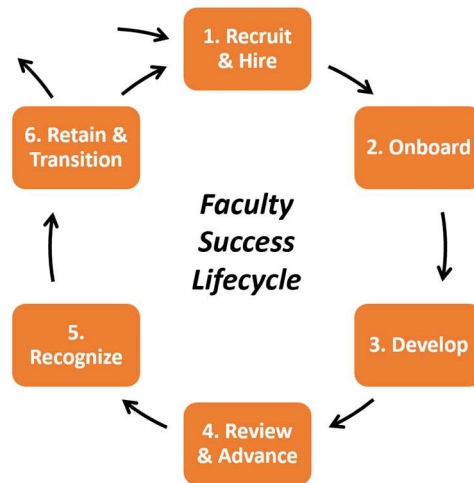


Figure 2. Faculty Success Lifecycle

Stage	Focus	Illustrative Activities
1. Recruit & Hire	Building the faculty base	Workforce/position planning, search committees, competitive offers, diverse candidate pipelines
2. Onboard	Setting new faculty up to succeed	New-faculty orientation, mentoring assignments, workload clarity, startup resources
3. Develop	Growing capability over a career	Teaching development, research/creative support, leadership pipelines, grant support
4. Review & Advance	Recognizing demonstrated performance	Annual performance review, merit process, promotion & tenure, post-tenure review
5. Recognize	Celebrating excellence	Internal awards, nominations for external/national awards, endowed positions
6. Retain & Transition	Sustaining and closing careers well	Retention strategies, succession planning, phased retirement, emeritus status

3.2 Student Success Lifecycle

Student Success spans the full arc of the student experience, from recruitment through post-graduation outcomes.

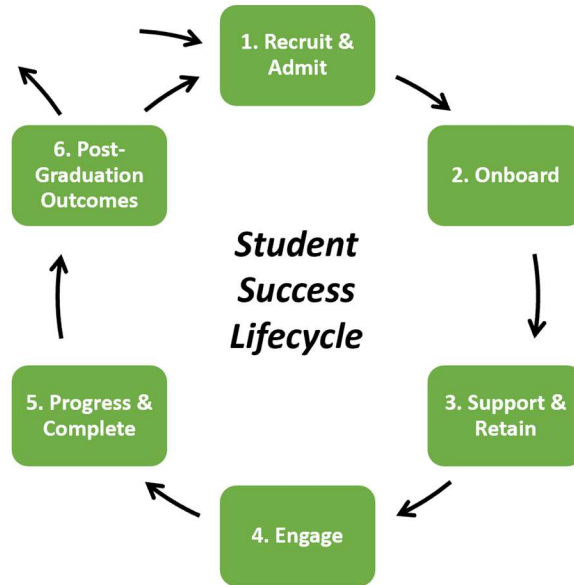


Figure 3. Student Success Lifecycle

Stage	Focus	Illustrative Activities
1. Recruit & Admit	Building the student pipeline	Recruitment strategy, admissions criteria, scholarships, articulation agreements
2. Onboard	Getting students off to a strong start	Orientation, first-year experience, advising assignment, financial aid literacy
3. Support & Retain	Keeping students on track	Academic advising, tutoring, early-alert systems, mental-health & wellness support
4. Engage	Deepening the learning experience	Undergraduate research, internships, service learning, study abroad, HIPs
5. Progress & Complete	Moving students to the finish line	Degree-audit monitoring, bottleneck-course management, graduation initiatives
6. Post-Graduation Outcomes	Proving the value of the degree	Employment/graduate-school placement, licensure pass rates, alumni engagement

3.3 Program Success Lifecycle

Program Success spans the full lifecycle of an academic program, from initial development through eventual sunseting.

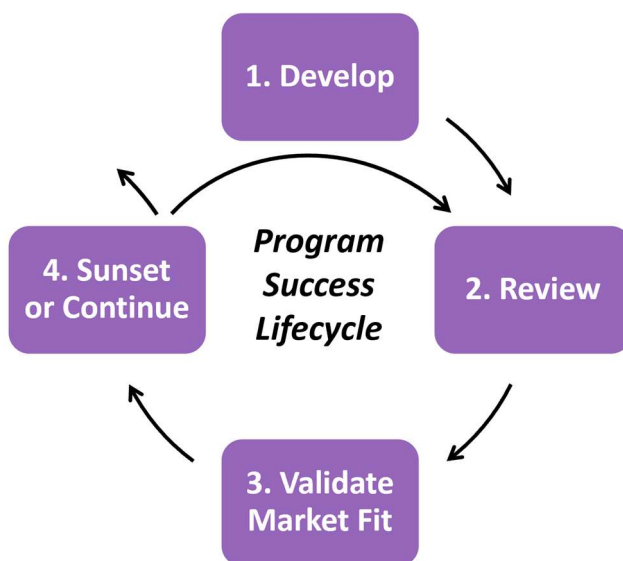


Figure 4. Program Success Lifecycle

Stage	Focus	Illustrative Activities
1. Develop	Launching programs that meet demand	Market/needs analysis, curriculum design, THECB/SACSCOC approval, resource planning
2. Review	Keeping programs current and rigorous	Periodic program review, specialized accreditation, curriculum-currency audits
3. Validate Market Fit	Proving programs deliver career value	Labor-market alignment, employer/advisory-board feedback, graduate outcome tracking
4. Sunset or Continue	Retiring programs responsibly	Teach-out plans, student transition support, faculty/resource reallocation

Framing Program Success this way keeps the work group's attention on the full lifecycle rather than only on new program approval: a healthy portfolio requires equal discipline in reviewing existing programs, validating their labor-market fit, and sunseting programs that no longer serve students or the institution well.

4. Work Groups

Each Success Pillar is operationalized through work groups at two layers: a College Work Group (CWG) at each college, and a single Provost Work Group (PWG) at the institutional level (Figure 5). The CWG layer is where discipline-specific faculty engage directly with pillar initiatives at the college level; the PWG layer coordinates that work across colleges and reports status and recommendations to the Joint Deans' Council.

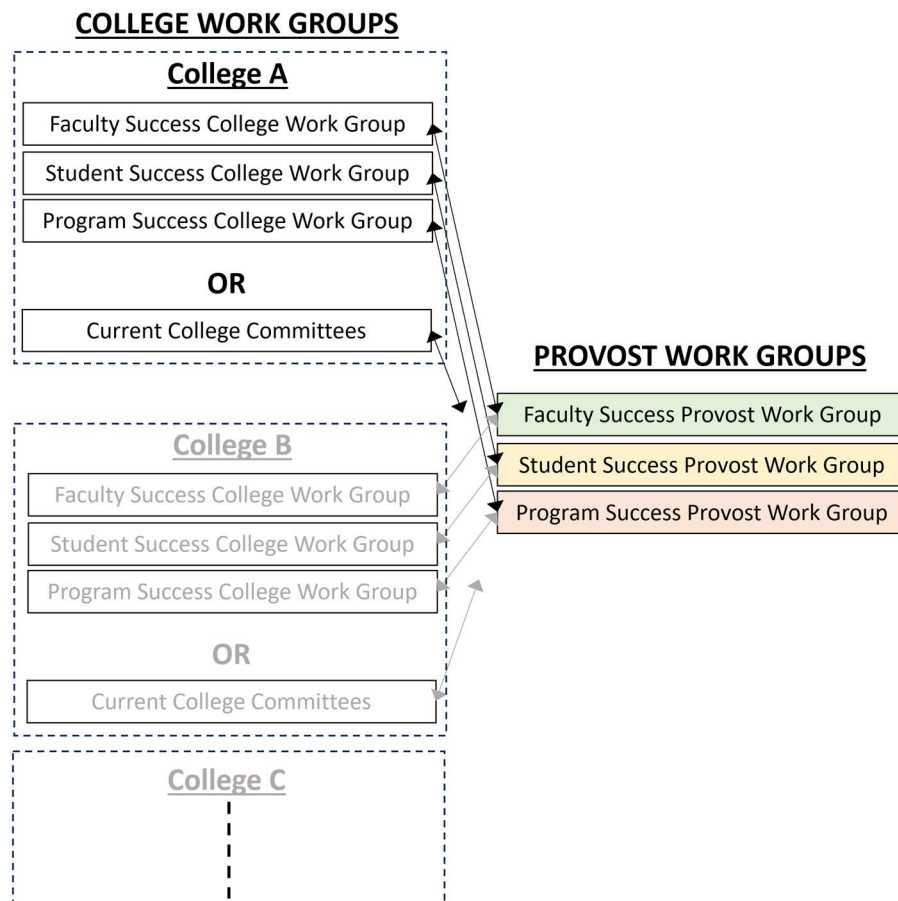


Figure 5. College Work Groups feed into the corresponding institutional Provost Work Group

4.1 College Work Groups (CWG)

Each college establishes three College Work Groups (one per Success Pillar) through which AIM initiatives are carried out locally:

- Faculty Success College Work Group (FSCWG)
- Student Success College Work Group (SSCWG)
- Program Success College Work Group (PSCWG)

Where a college already has a standing committee that covers the same ground, the dean may designate that committee as the College Work Group rather than stand up a new one.

4.2 Provost Work Groups (PWG)

At the institutional level, each Success Pillar has a single Provost Work Group (PWG):

- Faculty Success Provost Work Group
- Student Success Provost Work Group
- Program Success Provost Work Group

The chair or co-chair (or both depending on the size of each college) of each college's work group serve as that college's representatives on the corresponding Provost Work Group (PWG). This keeps the institutional layer directly connected to college-level work to ensure continuity and consistency. The work of PWGs are facilitated by vice provosts.

5. Work Group Participation

5.1 College Work Groups

- Size is set by the dean, based on the size and needs of the college.
- Membership is drawn within each college from full-time faculty in good-standing with the faculty workload structure (Teaching, Research, Clinical, Service) matching the needs of the initiatives under each success pillar. At the staff level, subject-matter experts may be added where an initiative calls for specific expertise.
- Occasionally, students may be included to provide input and feedback relevant to specific initiatives.

5.2 Provost Work Groups

- Each PWG is facilitated by a Vice Provost.
- Membership consists of the chair and/or co-chair of each college's corresponding CWG, along with staff members with expertise in specific success areas, creating an effective team structure with a broad knowledge base.
- Occasionally, students may be included to provide input and feedback relevant to specific initiatives.

5.3 Terms of Service and Reappointment

- Membership on a College Work Group and a Provost Work Group is for a term of one (1) year, aligned to the academic year.
- Based on the dean's recommendation reappointment is possible; CWG members may be reappointed for subsequent terms.

5.4 Effective Communication Among Work Groups

- College and Provost level work groups will have regular communication between them specific to the success pillar they belong to. However, it is anticipated that there will be cross college

and cross provost work group communication since certain initiative may apply to more than one success pillar.

- Each Provost Work Group will share progress with the Joint Deans' Council (with Research) on a regular cadence.
- Final decisions on recommendations arising from a Provost Work Group rest with institutional leadership; the provost may seek input from the president or other executive vice presidents before a final decision is made.

6. Charge and Scope of Work Groups

Each College Work Group and its corresponding Provost Work Group is organized around one Success Pillar and its lifecycle (Section 2). Initiatives identified under AIM's Seven Alignment Triangles are assigned to the lifecycle stage they most directly address.

A full initiative charter template, with the initial set of initiatives mapped to success pillars and lifecycle stages, will be developed and circulated in the coming weeks.

7. Vacancies and Removal

- College Work Group vacancies, including loss of good standing, are filled by the dean of the college.
- A vacancy in a Provost Work Group seat is filled by the college's newly designated CWG chair and/or co-chair, consistent with Section 4.

8. Initiatives and Success Pillars

Each initiative below is listed under its Success Pillar and A.I.M. Triangle(s), with a short narrative added in this version describing its purpose, scope, and how it connects to related initiatives elsewhere in the framework. These narratives are intended to give College and Provost Work Groups a shared starting point before initiative charters are drafted.

8.1 Faculty Success Pillar

PILLAR	Faculty Success Pillar
INSTITUTIONAL FACILITATOR(S)	Robert Dearth
A.I.M. TRIANGLES	Triangle 1: Title • Workload • Performance Review Triangle 2: Faculty • Title • Department

1.1 HOP Policies (UTS/UTRGV, jointly with Health Affairs)

This initiative reviews and aligns UTRGV's Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) policies with UT System (UTS) policy requirements, with particular attention to provisions shared with Health Affairs. The work group will identify gaps, redundancies, and conflicts between UTS and UTRGV language, and route recommended revisions through the appropriate governance and legal review channels. The

goal is a single, current set of faculty-facing policies that is consistent across the institution and defensible in an audit.

1.2 For each college, discipline-specific Titles/Metrics/Targets, compiled into an Annual Performance “Work Plan” as part of College Policies

Each college will define discipline-appropriate faculty titles, performance metrics, and annual targets that reflect the norms of its fields rather than a one-size-fits-all standard. These will be compiled into an Annual Performance Work Plan embedded in each college's guidelines, giving faculty and chairs a shared, written reference for expectations. Standardizing the format across colleges, while preserving discipline-specific content, will make performance expectations transparent and comparable at the institutional level.

1.3 Activity-Based Performance Tracking (A digital dashboard/platform)

This initiative establishes a digital platform to capture faculty activity data continuously across the academic year rather than relying solely on annual self-reports. The platform will roll up the four sub-areas below (teaching, research, clinical, and service) so performance can be tracked, benchmarked, and reported with less manual effort from faculty and chairs. It is intended to feed directly into annual evaluations, workload decisions, and institutional reporting.

1.3.1 Teaching Performance & Student Metrics

This sub-track captures teaching-related data such as course evaluations, section-level student outcomes, and instructional workload over time. It allows chairs and colleges to see teaching performance trends by faculty member, course, and modality rather than a single point-in-time snapshot. The resulting metrics will inform merit review, teaching awards, and course-assignment decisions.

1.3.2 Research Performance Metrics

This sub-track tracks scholarly productivity (such as publications, grants, creative activity, and citation or impact measures) appropriate to each discipline. It gives colleges a consistent way to monitor research trajectories over time and supports decisions on research space, course release, and start-up renewal. The metrics will feed into the Division of Research dashboards.

1.3.3 Clinical Performance Metrics

For faculty with clinical assignments, this sub-track tracks clinical productivity, patient/client outcomes where applicable, and clinical service load alongside teaching and research activity. It ensures clinical contributions are documented with the same rigor as teaching and research, so clinical faculty are evaluated on a complete and accurate record. This is developed with Health Affairs as the lead.

1.3.4 Service Performance Metrics

This sub-track documents faculty service to the department, college, university, profession, and community, which is often the least consistently recorded activity category.

Standardizing how service is logged and weighted will make it possible to recognize service equitably in evaluation and merit decisions. It also gives colleges visibility into service-load distribution to prevent over-reliance on a small number of faculty. The objective is not to capture all possible “service” but to monitor such activities at a reasonable granularity level that allows for performance review.

1.4 Annual Faculty Teaching Capacity Adjustment, based on prior academic year’s performance

Following each academic year, teaching assignments and course loads will be reviewed and adjusted based on the faculty member's actual teaching performance and capacity data from that year. This creates a feedback loop between demonstrated performance and the following year's workload, rather than treating teaching assignments as static. The adjustment process will use the metrics compiled in Initiative 1.3.1 as its primary input.

1.5 Annual Faculty “Research Space” Adjustment, based on prior academic year’s research performance

Physical and virtual research-space allocations will be reviewed annually and adjusted according to each faculty member's demonstrated research output and activity in the prior year. This ties a limited and often contested resource to current productivity rather than historical allocation, encouraging active use of research space. The process draws on the Research Performance Metrics (1.3.2) as its evidentiary basis.

1.6 Annual Evaluations and Merit Raise Model

This initiative develops a consistent, data-informed model for annual faculty evaluations and the merit raise process that follows from them, linking directly to the activity-tracking data captured under Initiative 1.3. The model will define how teaching, research, clinical, and service performance are weighted and combined into an overall rating (a numerical value) and merit recommendation. The intent is a transparent, defensible process that faculty can understand in advance of being evaluated.

1.7 Data Feed: Digital Measures/FPT alignment with institutional data

This initiative aligns data entered into Digital Measures/Faculty Performance Tool (FPT) with UTRGV's institutional systems of record, reducing duplicate data entry and reconciliation errors. It establishes automated or semi-automated data feeds so that faculty activity data flows consistently between systems used for evaluation, accreditation, and institutional reporting. The result should be a single, trusted source of faculty activity data rather than parallel, potentially conflicting records.

1.8 Buy-Out Policies: course and time buy-out

This initiative establishes consistent institutional policy for how faculty may buy out of teaching or other assigned duties using external funding, such as grants, and how that buy-out is priced,

approved, and tracked. Consistent rules across colleges will prevent inequitable practices and ensure buy-out arrangements are properly reflected in workload and budget systems. The policy will also address how bought-out time factors into annual evaluation and merit decisions.

2.1 Faculty Hiring Model: demand versus capacity

This initiative develops a model for evaluating faculty hiring requests against demonstrated instructional and research demand as well as current departmental capacity, rather than relying solely on historical position counts. It gives the provost's office and deans a consistent, data-driven basis for prioritizing hiring requests across competing college needs. The model will draw on enrollment, credit-hour production, and research-capacity data already captured elsewhere in the AIM framework.

2.2 Faculty Hiring “Lanes”: Traditional Tenure-Track/Tenured; Lecturer/Teaching; Research Faculty

This initiative formalizes distinct hiring lanes (tenure-track/tenured, lecturer/teaching, and research faculty) each with its own expectations, workload distribution, and evaluation criteria. Clear lanes allow colleges to hire the right type of faculty line for a given instructional or research need, rather than defaulting to a single traditional model. It also gives candidates and search committees clarity on the role and career path associated with each lane.

2.3 Faculty Offer Letters: development, resource allocation (start-up), routing, and approval

This initiative standardizes the content, resource commitments, and approval routing for faculty offer letters, including start-up package terms. A consistent template and approval workflow will reduce variability across colleges, ensure commitments are properly authorized and budgeted, and speed up the hiring process. It also creates an auditable record of what was promised to each new hire.

2.4 Faculty Start-Up: resource allocation, timeline of use, performance and resource-usage tracking

This initiative tracks how start-up funds and resources committed in offer letters are actually allocated, spent, and used against agreed timelines. It introduces performance checkpoints so colleges and the provost's office can see whether start-up investments are translating into the expected research or programmatic outcomes. This closes the loop between the commitments made under Initiative 2.3 and their actual use.

2.5 Memorandum of Appointment (MOA) annual process: renewals and non-renewals

This initiative standardizes the annual process by which non-tenure-line faculty appointments are renewed or not renewed via Memorandum of Appointment (MOA), including timelines, required documentation, and notice periods. A consistent process reduces legal and compliance risk and ensures faculty receive timely, clear communication about their appointment status. It also creates institution-wide visibility into renewal patterns across colleges.

2.6 Faculty Transition/Termination Process

This initiative documents and standardizes the process for faculty transition/termination across all appointment types, ensuring consistent application of due process, required approvals, and documentation. Consistency reduces institutional risk and ensures faculty are treated equitably regardless of college or department. The process will be reviewed against UTS policy and applicable HOP provisions identified under Initiative 1.3.

2.7 Faculty Administrative Roles: validation of need, compensation model, and annual review (e.g., Associate Deans, Chairs, Associate Chairs)

This initiative establishes a consistent process for validating the need for faculty administrative roles such as associate deans, chairs, and associate chairs, along with a standardized compensation model and annual performance review for those roles. It ensures administrative roles are created and continued based on documented institutional need rather than precedent alone. The annual review component ties administrative stipends and course releases to demonstrated performance in the role.

2.8 Faculty Endowments and Fellowships (with Institutional Advancement): appointments & terms, expectations, performance monitoring

This initiative, developed jointly with Institutional Advancement, standardizes how endowed faculty positions and fellowships are appointed, what performance expectations accompany them, and how holders are monitored over the term of the appointment. Clear terms and expectations protect the intent of the donor while ensuring the position continues to generate the scholarly or programmatic impact it was created to support. Regular performance monitoring also provides material for Institutional Advancement to use in donor stewardship.

8.2 Student Success Pillar

PILLAR	Student Success Pillar
INSTITUTIONAL FACILITATOR(S)	Jonikka Charlton
A.I.M. TRIANGLES	Triangle 5: Program • Concentration • Course Triangle 6: Course • Section • Modality Triangle 7: Section • Schedule • Location/Day/Time

5.1 Student Learning Outcomes

This initiative reviews how student learning outcomes are defined, assessed, and reported at the course and program level, ensuring they are current, measurable, and aligned to accreditation expectations. It creates a consistent institutional approach to closing the assessment loop, so outcome data actually informs curricular and instructional improvement. This work directly supports SACSCOC compliance and program review under Initiative 4.1.

5.2 Compliance with Roadmaps: substitutions/waivers, planned-not-offered courses, not-planned/offered courses, overrides at both undergrad and graduate levels

This initiative examines how closely actual course delivery matches published degree roadmaps, tracking substitutions, waivers, courses planned but not offered, courses offered but not planned, and manual overrides at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This is a quality control and quality assurance process. Frequent deviations from the roadmap slow time-to-degree and create advising confusion, so this data will identify where roadmaps and actual scheduling practice need to be properly aligned. The findings feed directly into the new scheduling grid work under Initiative 7.1.

5.3 Curricular Financial Health Analysis (Section/Course/Concentration/Program/College: Red-Green \$ status)

This initiative develops a financial health analysis of the curriculum at every level (section, course, concentration, program, and college) using a simple red/green status indicator tied to cost and revenue. It gives deans and the provost's office a consistent, comparable view of which parts of the curriculum are financially sustainable and which are not. This analysis is a key input to the enrollment optimization work in Initiative 5.4 and the program review process in Initiative 4.1.

5.4 Program-Concentration-Course: historical enrollment (seat) analysis for optimization, continue/sunset/revise decisions (utilize Initiative 5.3 financial metrics)

This initiative analyzes multi-year enrollment (filled vs empty seats) trends at the program, concentration, and course level to inform continue, sunset, or revise decisions. Combined with the financial health metrics from Initiative 5.3, it gives colleges an evidence base for curricular decisions rather than relying on anecdote or tradition. The output is intended to directly inform program review recommendations under Initiative 4.1.

5.5 Core Curriculum as a “Program”: reducing from 42 to 30 hours (fewer course choices/alternatives, standardized syllabi per course, AI literacy)

This initiative treats the Core Curriculum as a program in its own right, redesigning it from the current 42 semester credit hours to 30, with fewer course choices and alternatives to establish a “core” foundation, standardized syllabi within each core course (through course coordinators), and the incorporation of AI literacy. A leaner, more standardized core shortens time-to-degree and reduces the advising and scheduling complexity created by a large menu of interchangeable options. Standardized syllabi and shared AI-literacy content will bring consistency to the core curriculum across sections.

6.1 Review of Course-to-Programs contribution in terms of required/elective status

This initiative reviews how each course contributes to the programs that use it, distinguishing required from elective status across every program in which the course appears. This mapping reveals courses that are essential to many programs versus those serving few students in a narrow role, informing scheduling priority and resource allocation. It is a foundational data layer for the elective review in Initiative 6.5 and the scheduling work in Triangle 7.

6.2 Discrepancies among course rotations, program of study, and roadmaps

This initiative identifies mismatches between how courses are actually rotated (offered term to term), the official program of study, and the published student roadmap. Where these three documents disagree, students face scheduling conflicts, delayed graduation, or the need for overrides and substitutions. Resolving these discrepancies is a prerequisite to reliable roadmap compliance under Initiative 5.2.

6.3 Historical analysis of section-enrollment-faculty patterns and metrics (utilize 3.4 faculty teaching portfolio)

This initiative analyzes historical patterns linking section enrollment to the faculty member teaching it, drawing on the Faculty-Course Teaching Portfolio data developed under Initiative 3.4. It surfaces patterns such as consistent under-enrolled sections tied to a particular faculty member and day/time slot, which can inform both scheduling and faculty development decisions. This analysis supports both the scheduling grid redesign in Initiative 7.1 and course-level financial health in Initiative 5.3.

6.4 Historical analysis of section-modality-faculty patterns and metrics (utilize 3.4 faculty teaching portfolio)

This initiative extends the section-level analysis in Initiative 6.3 to modality (in-person, online, hybrid) examining how modality choices by faculty correlate with enrollment, student outcomes, and section viability over time. It uses the same Faculty-Course Teaching Portfolio data as Initiative 6.3 to give colleges evidence on which modality mix best serves a given course and student population. The findings will inform modality decisions embedded in the new scheduling grid under Initiative 7.1.

6.5 Elective Course Review: continue/improve/sunset (volume & variety per program)

This initiative reviews the volume and variety of elective courses offered per program to identify electives that should continue as-is, be improved, or be sunset due to low enrollment or redundancy. Programs with an excessive number of low-enrollment electives spread faculty and scheduling resources thin without commensurate benefit to students. The review uses the course-to-program contribution data from Initiative 6.1 as its starting point.

7.1 Student-Centered Course Scheduling: new scheduling grid for Fall 2027

This initiative develops a new, student-centered course scheduling grid built around standardized MW, MWF, and TR meeting patterns, to take effect Fall 2027. A predictable, standardized grid reduces schedule conflicts for students taking courses across departments and colleges, and simplifies space and faculty scheduling for the institution. This is the flagship deliverable of Triangle 7 and depends on the data gathered under Initiatives 5.2, 6.3, and 6.4.

7.2 Schedule Impact Metrics (student, space, faculty, travel, time)

This initiative defines and tracks the metrics needed to evaluate the impact of scheduling decisions on students, physical space, faculty, campus travel time, and time-to-degree. These metrics establish a

before-and-after baseline for assessing whether the new scheduling grid under Initiative 7.1 actually improves outcomes once implemented.

The four sub-areas break this metric set into its component parts.

7.2.1 Schedule type, instruction method, and section size

This sub-track tracks each section's schedule type, instruction method, and enrollment size as core scheduling variables. These three factors together largely determine space utilization and student experience, making them the primary lens for evaluating scheduling effectiveness. The data will be reviewed alongside the modality analysis in 6.4.

7.2.2 Deviations from planned versus actual

This sub-track measures how often actual course scheduling deviates from what was planned, including late changes, room reassignments, and time-slot shifts. High deviation rates signal planning or capacity problems upstream and undermine confidence in the published schedule. Reducing deviation is a direct measure of success for the new scheduling grid in 7.1.

7.2.3 Section demand-capacity: “seat” management

This sub-track monitors the balance between student demand for a section and the number of seats made available, flagging sections that fill immediately (signaling under-capacity) or that run persistently under-enrolled. Active seat management allows the institution to add or cancel sections in response to real demand rather than fixed historical patterns. This connects directly to the enrollment analysis under 5.4.

7.2.4 Course cancellation process and metrics

This sub-track formalizes the criteria, timeline, and approval process for cancelling low-enrollment sections, along with metrics to track how often and how late cancellations occur. A consistent, well-communicated cancellation process minimizes disruption to students who must find an alternate section. Cancellation data also feeds back into future scheduling and elective-review decisions under 6.5.

7.3 “Base Campus”–driven scheduling models: faculty and student perspectives

This initiative examines scheduling models built around each faculty member's and student's designated base campus, given UTRGV's multi-campus footprint across the Rio Grande Valley. It weighs the trade-offs of base-campus-driven scheduling from both the faculty workload perspective and the student access/travel-time perspective. The goal is a scheduling approach that respects base-campus assignments without recreating the access barriers a unified scheduling grid is meant to solve.

7.4 Teaching Space Usage: space category (THECB code: classroom, laboratory, computer lab, ...), capacity usage rate (students/room per day)

This initiative analyzes teaching space usage by THECB space category (classroom, laboratory, computer lab, and similar designations) and calculates capacity usage rates such as students per room per day. This gives facilities planning and the provost's office an evidence base for space utilization that state reporting already requires UTRGV to track. Low-utilization space identified here becomes a direct input to the scheduling grid redesign under Initiative 7.1.

8.3 Program Success Pillar

PILLAR	Program Success Pillar
INSTITUTIONAL FACILITATOR(S)	Laura Saenz, Christine Shupala
A.I.M. TRIANGLES	Triangle 3: Faculty • Effectiveness • Program Triangle 4: Program • Department • College

3.1 Faculty Credentialing for Teaching

This initiative reviews and documents faculty credentials against SACSCOC faculty-qualification requirements for every course each faculty member teaches. Systematic credentialing review reduces accreditation risk and ensures assignments are defensible if questioned during a program or institutional review. It also identifies credentialing gaps early enough to address them through additional coursework, credentials, or reassignment.

3.2 Special Course Formats and Arrangements: approval, faculty credentialing, and faculty workload

This initiative standardizes the approval process for special course formats and arrangements (such as independent study, directed research, or non-standard delivery) along with the credentialing and workload implications for the faculty member involved. Clear, consistent rules prevent special arrangements from becoming an unmonitored source of workload inequity or credentialing risk. The initiative ties directly to the credentialing work under Initiative 3.1.

3.3 Graduate Faculty Appointment: Faculty expertise matched to Masters and Doctoral programs

This initiative reviews the process for appointing graduate faculty status, ensuring each faculty member's expertise is properly matched to the master's or doctoral program(s) they serve. Rigorous graduate faculty appointment protects the quality and credibility of graduate programs and supports the institution's research and graduate-education goals. This work is coordinated with the Graduate College.

3.4 Faculty-Course Teaching Portfolio Analysis: type of courses (required, elective, core), frequency of teaching, type of modalities, enrollment trends

This initiative builds a portfolio-level view of each faculty member's teaching history (course type: required, elective, core), how frequently they teach each course, modality mix, and enrollment trends

over time. This portfolio becomes a shared data source that multiple other initiatives (6.3, 6.4) draw on rather than each rebuilding similar analysis independently. It also gives chairs a fuller picture of a faculty member's teaching contribution than a single semester's assignment can show.

3.5 Faculty Teaching Performance Analysis: variance across sections, per course, per faculty, across multiple semesters, student evaluation

This initiative analyzes variance in teaching performance across sections of the same course, across different faculty teaching it, and across multiple semesters, incorporating student evaluation data. Understanding this variance helps identify both strong-performing sections worth studying and sections that may need instructional support or course-design attention. This analysis is a key input to the Annual Evaluations and Merit Raise Model under Initiative 1.6.

4.1 Program Review and Continuous Improvement: review frequency, metrics (beyond compliance), revenue vs. cost analysis, continue/improve/sunset decisions

This initiative redesigns the academic program review process to define review frequency, incorporate metrics that go beyond baseline compliance, and add revenue-versus-cost analysis, all feeding into continue, improve, or sunset recommendations. It draws directly on the enrollment and financial data developed in Initiatives 5.3 and 5.4 so that program review decisions are grounded in current data rather than a static self-study. This is the primary mechanism through which the Program Success lifecycle is enacted.

4.2 New Program: development protocol, timelines, and approval process

This initiative standardizes the protocol, timeline, and approval process for developing and launching new academic programs, including required market and needs analysis and THECB/SACSCOC approval steps. A consistent, well-documented process shortens the path from concept to launch and ensures new programs are vetted for demand and resource feasibility before significant investment. It formalizes the “Develop” stage of the Program Success lifecycle.

4.3 Program “Performance” in the market: job placement, salary, career longevity

This initiative tracks how graduates of each program perform in the labor market, including job placement rates, starting and mid-career salary, and career longevity in the field. This labor-market evidence validates (or challenges) a program's continued value proposition and feeds directly into the “Validate Market Fit” stage of the Program Success lifecycle. It also provides material for recruitment, accreditation, and legislative reporting.

4.4 Program Policies and Requirements: theoretical/planned versus actuals, policies not followed/waived

This initiative compares each program's theoretical, planned policies and degree requirements against what is actually being followed in practice, including instances where policies are waived or not enforced. Gaps between policy and practice create compliance risk and inconsistent student

experience across sections or cohorts of the same program. Findings here connect to the roadmap-compliance review under Initiative 5.2.

4.5 Rebranding of existing programs, departments, and colleges for modernization with minimal new resources, targeting activities with higher revenue potential

This initiative evaluates opportunities to rebrand or reposition existing programs, departments, and colleges to better reflect current market terminology and student demand, prioritizing changes that require minimal new resources and target higher revenue potential. Modernized names and positioning can improve enrollment without the cost of building an entirely new program.

4.6 Department-College “fit”: strategic moves of departments/faculty fully or partially with dual appointments, creation of new departments, new colleges

This initiative evaluates the strategic fit of departments within their current colleges, considering full or partial moves of departments or faculty (including dual appointments), and the potential creation of new departments or colleges where warranted. Structural fit affects resource sharing, interdisciplinary collaboration, and administrative efficiency, so this review looks at organizational structure as a lever for institutional impact, not just a matter of tradition.

9. What is Next?

- Deans will establish College Work Groups (CWGs) and identify their corresponding Provost Work Group (PWG) representatives in **September 2026**.
- As shown in Figure 6, the initiatives for Academic Year 2026-2027 (AY27) will be determined through a hybrid approach. Institutional priorities and college priorities will be evaluated, and the AY27 initiatives portfolio will be determined in **September 2026**.
- A kickoff meeting will be scheduled with the three Provost Work Groups to identify priorities, sequence initiatives, and establish timelines in **October 2026**.
- **Fall 2026** will serve as a preparation phase, allowing CWGs and PWGs to build effective working relationships.
- **Spring 2027** will mark the formal start of CWG/PWG-level work.
- Some initiative-related activity is already underway at the Provost level in Fall 2026 and will continue in parallel.

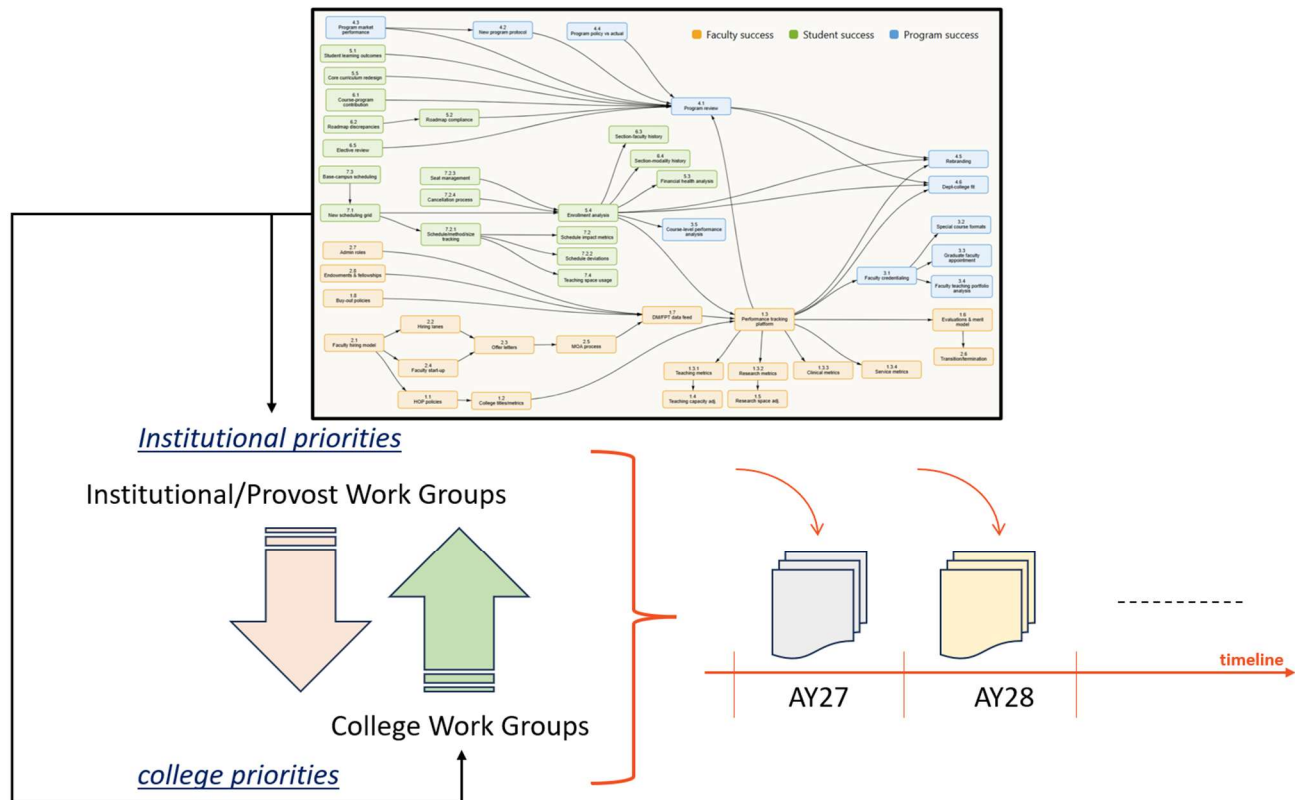
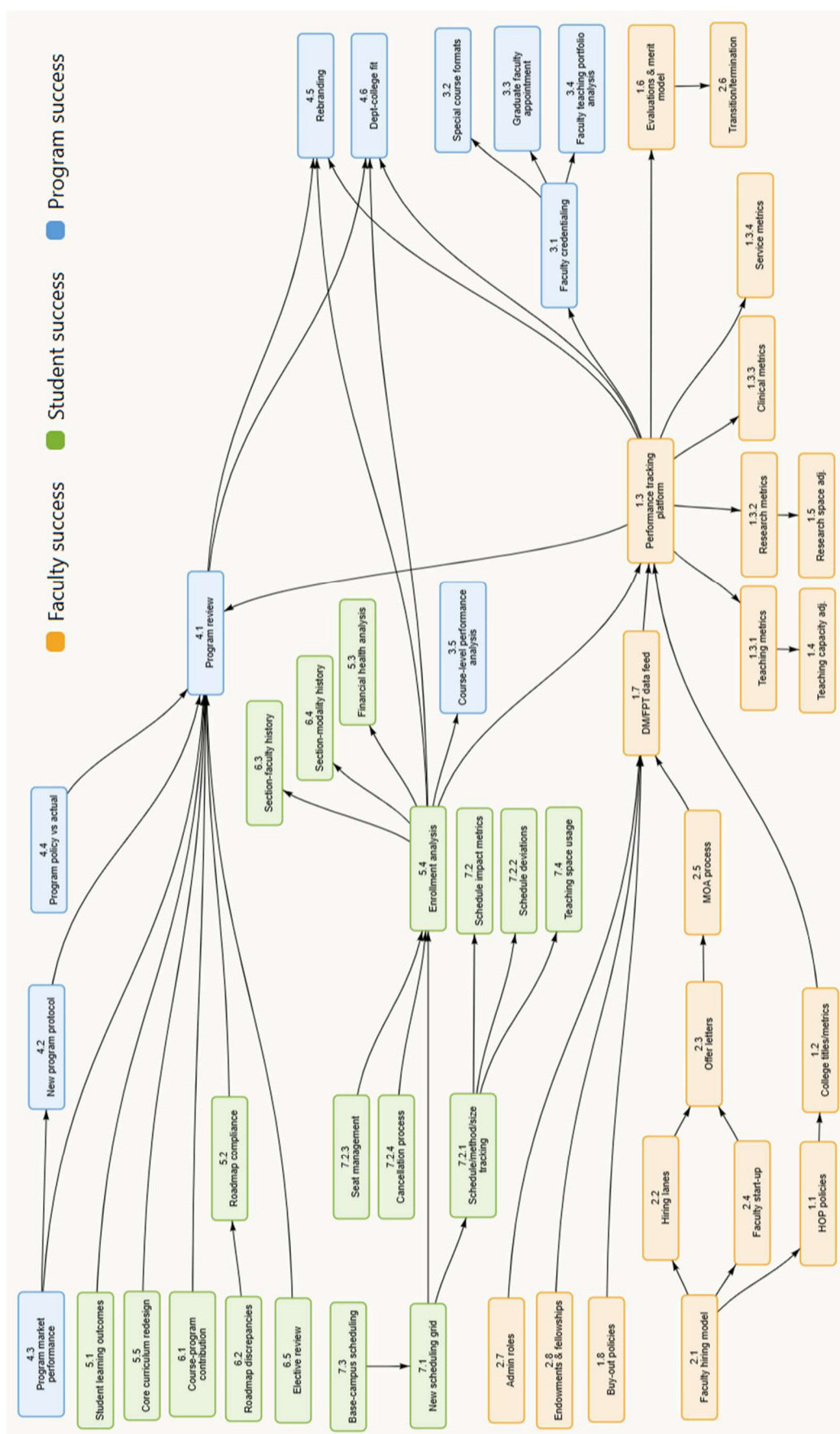


Figure 6. A Hybrid Approach to Developing an AIM Initiatives Portfolio

10. Dependency Mapping of Initiatives

The 49 AIM initiatives do not operate as stand-alone, independent processes; rather, they are interdependent, with the input and/or output of one often contingent on others. Mapping these dependencies and sequencing work group activities accordingly is critical to effective coordination, timely completion, and the overall success of the AIM portfolio. Figure 7 illustrates the Initiative Dependency Map.

**Figure 7. Initiative Dependency Map**