

Advancing Institutional Impact

AN ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR
EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, AND EXCELLENCE



FACULTY
SUCCESS



ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS



STUDENT
SUCCESS



SOCIETAL
IMPACT

“ Alignment creates direction.
Integration creates momentum.
Maximization creates impact. ”

Can Saygin, Ph.D.

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

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley



TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Letter to My Colleagues	5
Principles for Academic Excellence	6
1. Introduction: Why AIM?.....	8
What Comes Next?	10
2. Why Alignment?.....	11
The Student: Why We Are Here.....	11
Programs: A Living Product Portfolio	12
What Can We Control? Strategic Alignment of People, Budget, and Space.....	12
The Value Stream: From Faculty Success to Student Success	14
Student Success: What Does It Mean for You?	15
Metrics that Matter	15
Sample Set of Student Success Metrics	16
Sample Set of Faculty Success Metrics	18
Faculty Development for Faculty Success	18
From Faculty Success to Institutional Impact.....	19
3. Operationalizing Alignment for Teaching: The Seven Triangles	20
Principles to Triangles to Initiatives	23
Triangle 1: Title • Workload • Performance Review	23
Triangle 2: Faculty • Title • Department	23
Triangle 3: Faculty • Effectiveness • Program	24
Triangle 4: Program • Department • College	24
Triangle 5: Program • Concentration • Course.....	25
Triangle 6: Course • Section • Modality	25
Triangle 7: Section • Schedule • Location/Day/Time	25
4. Why Start with Triangle 1: Title•Workload•Performance Review ?	26
The Faculty Performance Review: Career Progression.....	28
We Need an Effective Faculty Information System to Eliminate Administrative Burden	30
Conclusion: Impact of Triangle-1	30

A Letter to My Colleagues

Dear Colleagues,

This document presents my personal observations, leadership philosophy, and operational framework developed through my experiences in higher education administration. It is intended to stimulate discussion, provide a common language, and establish a structured approach for improving institutional effectiveness, efficiency, and excellence. It should not be interpreted as university policy or as a final implementation plan. This document is a roadmap intended to foster a culture of intentional alignment, evidence-based decision making, and continuous improvement that transforms how we plan, prioritize, collaborate, allocate resources, deliver programs, and measure institutional success. By embedding the principles of Align, Integrate, and Maximize “AIM” into our daily work, we can build a culture of continuous improvement that strengthens faculty success, student success, and the university's long-term societal impact.

I am firmly convinced of the **WHY**. Higher education is operating in an increasingly complex environment characterized by changing student demographics, evolving workforce needs, finite resources, expanding research expectations, and growing accountability. These realities require a more intentional approach to aligning institutional priorities with institutional resources of people, budget, and space.

The **WHAT** continues to evolve. While this document identifies many of the organizational relationships and alignment opportunities that deserve attention, it does not attempt to provide an exhaustive list. As our understanding grows through discussion, analysis, and experience, additional initiatives and refinements will naturally emerge.

The **HOW** is intentionally left open. Successful implementation cannot be prescribed through a single institutional blueprint because disciplines, colleges, and schools differ in their missions, cultures, accreditation requirements, and operational needs. Instead, this framework is designed to provide a common institutional structure while allowing each college and school the flexibility to develop discipline-specific solutions. In this way, we can achieve consistency in our institutional approach without sacrificing the customization necessary for academic excellence.

Sincerely,



Can Saygin

Principles for Academic Excellence

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.

Principles for Academic Excellence

Seven Guiding Principles Aligned with AIM: **Align** • **Integrate** • **Maximize**

These principles guide our decisions and actions to advance faculty success, empower student success, and strengthen institutional impact.

- 1** **Faculty Success Enables Student Success**
 Student success is our ultimate goal, but it is not achievable without faculty success. Clear alignment of appointments, workload expectations, and performance reviews builds fairness, accountability, and professional growth, which is the foundation for excellence.
- 2** **Faculty Expertise Should Align with Department**
 Academic appointments should reflect the faculty member's disciplinary identity, scholarly expertise, and instructional responsibilities. Alignment enables faculty to contribute at the highest level to students, departments, and the institution.
- 3** **Faculty Credentials Should Match Course and Program Assignments**
 Faculty with the right credentials and experience should be assigned to the courses and 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**
 Programs should be monitored and reviewed regularly against accreditation, learning effectiveness, and financial health metrics. Departments and colleges should exist because they create the strongest environment for program excellence, not simply due to history.
- 5** **Curricula Should Be Intentionally Designed for Coherence**
 Courses should collectively support concentrations, and concentrations should 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 principles, not by default, convenience, or precedent. Instructional capacity should match real student need, without waste of space, time, or effort.
- 7** **Scheduling Should Optimize the Full Student and Faculty Experience**
 Course scheduling extends beyond assigning classrooms. It requires coordinating locations, modalities, transportation, days, and times to improve utilization, reduce conflicts, minimize travel, increase faculty productivity, and shorten time-to-degree.

- 
Student-Centered
 Our decisions start and end with student success.
- 
Integrity & Fairness
 We ensure transparency, equity, and accountability in everything we do.
- 
Evidence-Informed
 We use data, research, and insight to drive better outcomes.
- 
Continuous Improvement
 We review, learn, and adapt to elevate quality and performance.
- 
Collaboration
 We achieve more together across units and disciplines.

UTRGV™

A Community-Empowering
Research University

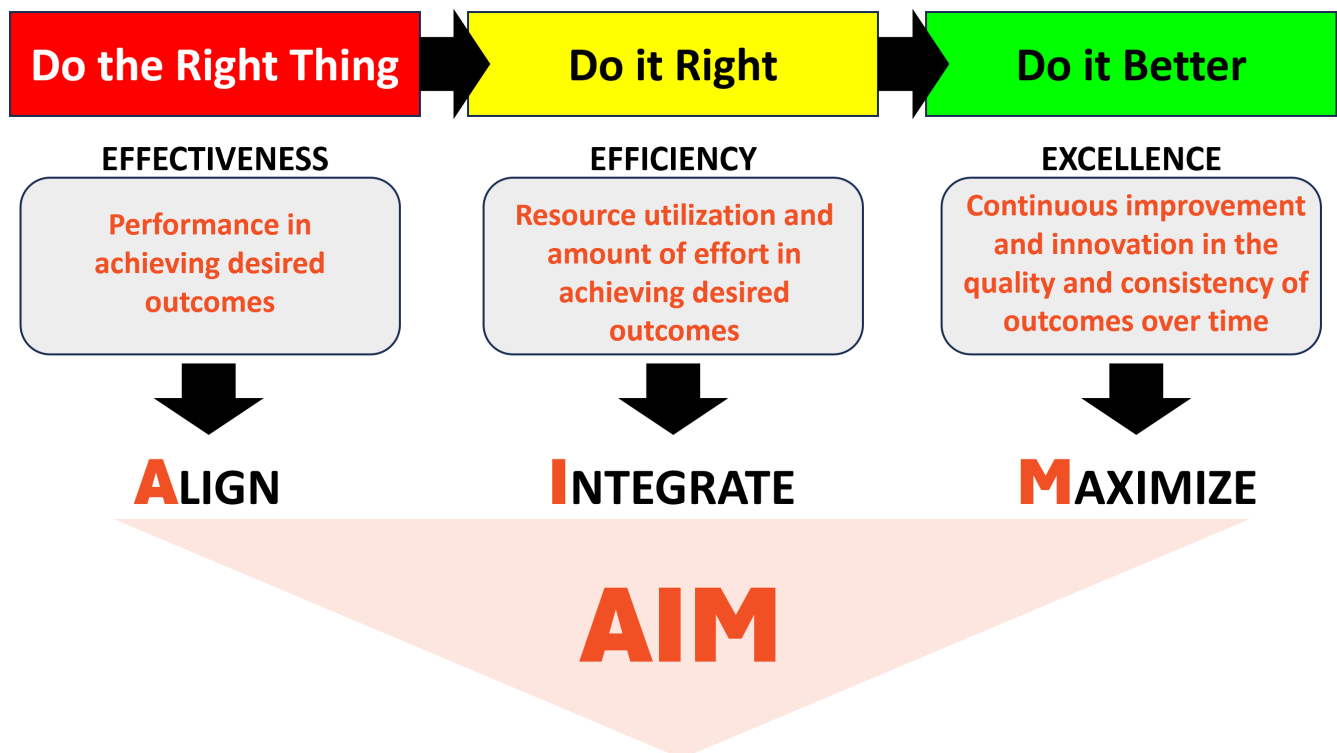
Academic Year 2026-2027

A.I.M. for Institutional Impact

Align for Effectiveness, **I**ntegrate for Efficiency, **M**aximize for Excellence

1. Introduction: Why AIM?

Institutional success is not achieved simply by working harder; it is achieved by working strategically as a team. In today's rapidly changing higher education environment, universities must continuously evaluate whether they are pursuing the right priorities, utilizing their resources wisely, and improving over time. The AIM Framework provides a practical operational model built around three progressive principles: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Excellence.



AIM for Institutional Impact: Align for Effectiveness, Integrate for Efficiency, Maximize for Excellence

The framework begins with Effectiveness: Do the Right Thing. Before discussing productivity or performance, institutions must first ensure that they are pursuing the right mission, priorities, and outcomes.

Effectiveness asks a fundamental question: Are we achieving the outcomes that matter most?

At the university level, this means alignment of many factors with the institution's strategic goals. Without alignment, even extraordinary effort can produce limited institutional impact. Alignment is the first step; therefore, it is the foundation of success.

Once priorities are aligned, the focus shifts to **Efficiency**: Do It Right. Efficiency recognizes that institutional resources are finite. Success depends not only on what we accomplish but also on how well we **integrate** our faculty, staff, facilities, technology, time, financial resources, and so on.

Efficiency asks: Are we achieving our desired outcomes with the optimal use of resources and effort?

This stage emphasizes integrating processes across organizational units, eliminating duplication, improving coordination, and creating systems that allow people to work together rather than independently. Integration transforms aligned priorities into coordinated institutional action.

The highest level is **Excellence**: Do It Better. Excellence is not a destination but a culture of continuous improvement. It focuses on consistently improving (**maximizing**) the quality, consistency, and sustainability of outcomes through innovation, assessment, and learning.

Excellence asks: How can we continuously improve and maximize what we already do well?

Institutions committed to excellence encourage experimentation, use evidence for decision making, benchmark against leading practices, and create feedback loops that drive ongoing improvement. Maximization means extracting the greatest long-term value from every investment while continuously raising institutional performance built on operational awareness and strategic vision.

Together, these three principles form the AIM Model.

- A – Align for Effectiveness.
- I – Integrate for Efficiency.
- M – Maximize for Excellence.

The progression is intentional. Effectiveness must come before efficiency, because doing the wrong things efficiently still produces poor results. Likewise, efficiency must precede excellence, because continuous improvement has little value if underlying systems are fragmented or misaligned. Excellence therefore builds upon a strong foundation of aligned priorities and integrated operations.

The AIM Framework provides a practical approach for all stakeholders; whether evaluating academic programs, faculty workload, research investments, student success initiatives, or administrative operations, you can ask three simple questions:

1. Are we doing the right things? (Effectiveness → Align)
2. Are we doing them right? (Efficiency → Integrate)
3. How can we do them even better? (Excellence → Maximize)

By systematically answering these questions, we can create a sustainable culture that improves performance while advancing our mission. Ultimately, AIM is more than an operational model; it is a philosophy for achieving greater institutional impact through strategic alignment, operational integration, and continuous maximization of outcomes.

What Comes Next?

Because the **AIM Framework** is intentionally sequential, our journey begins with the **A: Alignment**. Our first priority is to identify where misalignments exist across the institution and determine how **organizational elements** can be better aligned with our mission and strategic goals. These findings will lead to a series of targeted **Alignment Initiatives** designed to (re)build and strengthen institutional effectiveness.

As these initiatives mature, this document will expand to include additional sections on **Integration** and **Maximization**. Integration will focus on connecting organizational elements to improve institutional efficiency, while Maximization will emphasize continuous improvement, innovation, and the pursuit of excellence through evidence-based, metrics-driven decision making.

Transforming an institution is not accomplished through a single initiative or within a single year. It requires patience, collaboration, disciplined execution, and a long-term commitment to continuous improvement. Over the next several years, we will patiently, collectively, and decisively advance the **AIM Framework** to strengthen our institutional effectiveness, improve operational efficiency, and achieve enduring excellence.



So, let's begin...

2. Why Alignment?

Higher education is one of the most complex organizations to lead: exceptional people, diverse disciplines, multiple campuses, finite resources, and thousands of operational decisions made every semester. Amid this complexity, one mission must remain constant and undivided: student success. Every discipline, campus, and decision ultimately exists to prepare students for meaningful careers and successful lives beyond graduation.

Alignment is the coordinated effort of ensuring all **organizational elements**, such as strategy, teams, operations, policies, technology,... work together toward long-term strategic goals. It minimizes isolated, siloed, and sub-optimal, conflicting, self-destructing work, and enables every unit to actively support and contribute to the institution's overarching mission.

When systematically done, Alignment provides fundamental advantages:

1. **Sustains competitive advantage:** enables timely adaptation in a dynamic environment
2. **Sharpens focus on priorities:** concentrates effort where it matters most
3. **Strengthens coordination and collaboration:** connects people and units working toward shared goals
4. **Reduces waste:** eliminates inefficiencies and non-value-added activities
5. **Improves decision-making:** grounds choices in shared priorities and better information

Alignment is the foundation upon which Integration and Maximization will be built. Misaligned effort is effort diverted away from students. Alignment is the bridge between strategy and execution, and student success is the destination that bridge must lead to.

The Student: Why We Are Here

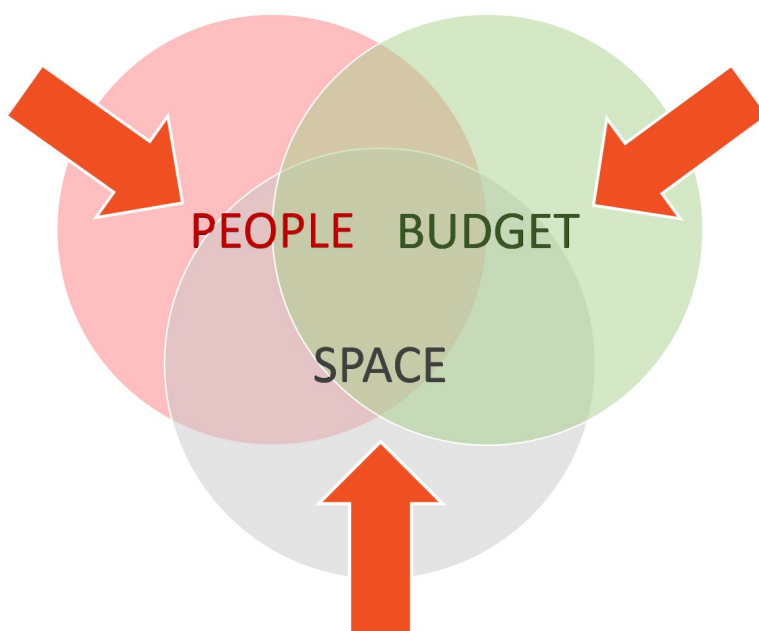
At the center of the institution's overarching mission sits a simple but easily forgotten question: **why are our students here?** We engage with our students through various programs. In this document, I am defining “program” in a generic way such that it is not perceived only as an “academic program”.

A program is the organized, sustained deployment of aligned people, budget, and space toward a defined purpose. It can be academic (a degree or certificate), scholarly (a research initiative), developmental (an advising or student-support initiative), or experiential (a student-life or engagement initiative). A program is not a title or a department; it is the vehicle through which strategic resources become “value-added programs” for our students. If People, Budget, and Space are what we invest, Programs are what we deliver.

Programs: A Living Product Portfolio

An academic program's effectiveness is defined by its ability to prepare students for sustainable careers and a successful life beyond graduation.

- **Evaluation of Program Effectiveness:** Does this program lead to real opportunities, employment, and upward mobility for our students? When do we stop offering programs that are no longer effective? When do we introduce new ones?
- **Effectiveness Signals:** Weak job placement? Declining demand? Is this a UTRGV issue, or a broader trend for that profession?
- **Program Development:** New programs should be driven by labor market data, employer demand, and emerging technology (not tradition or convenience).
- **Program Sunsetting:** Higher education operates in "additive" mode: we launch new programs, policies, and initiatives, but rarely retire them. Typically, nothing carries an end date, so capacity keeps getting committed with no mechanism to reclaim it and no standing awareness of how much capacity we actually have left. This has to change.



Alignment of Strategic Resources: People, Budget, Space

What Can We Control? Strategic Alignment of People, Budget, and Space

Reinventing higher education starts with us, inside our own walls. Every program we develop, deploy, and manage is shaped by two forces we do not control. There is **Competition** from other institutions with various alternative pathways for students to consider and there are **Regulations** we must comply with.

We can respond to **Competition** and **Regulations** by making timely strategic decisions on how we use our three strategic resources: People, Budget, and Space. They are finite, dynamic, and continually evolving in response to changing institutional needs and external factors, enrollment, workforce demands, and various external

conditions in the presence of conflicting objectives and competing goals. Every decision involves one or more of them, and every opportunity cost reflects how effectively they are aligned (or misaligned), at a given point in time, toward our ultimate goal **student success**.

People: “Who” do we hire, and are we setting them up to succeed? People are our greatest strength: students, faculty, staff, and partners create the intellectual capital that drives teaching, research, innovation, and service. This means attending to capacity, capability, career development, and time to do the work well.

Budget: “How” do we allocate resources? Budget is a strategic expression of institutional priorities, not historical inertia. Every dollar should advance the mission and trace back to the students it ultimately serves through revenue, expense, investment, and timing decisions.

Space: “How” do we use, develop, monitor, and redefine our facilities and infrastructure? Space is more than buildings: classrooms, labs, research and clinical environments, offices, and virtual learning spaces. Space should be available at the right time, at the right place, with the right conditions whenever teaching, research, and learning require it: function, scheduling, maintenance, renovation, and timing.

True institutional effectiveness is achieved not by optimizing People, Budget, and Space independently, but by aligning them around the institutional mission.

Student Success Is the Ultimate Goal

Student Success is the process through which learners achieve their academic goals, develop the knowledge, skills, agency, and well-being needed to thrive throughout life, attain meaningful careers, and contribute positively to their communities and society.

... and this is our job.

What Do We Deliver?

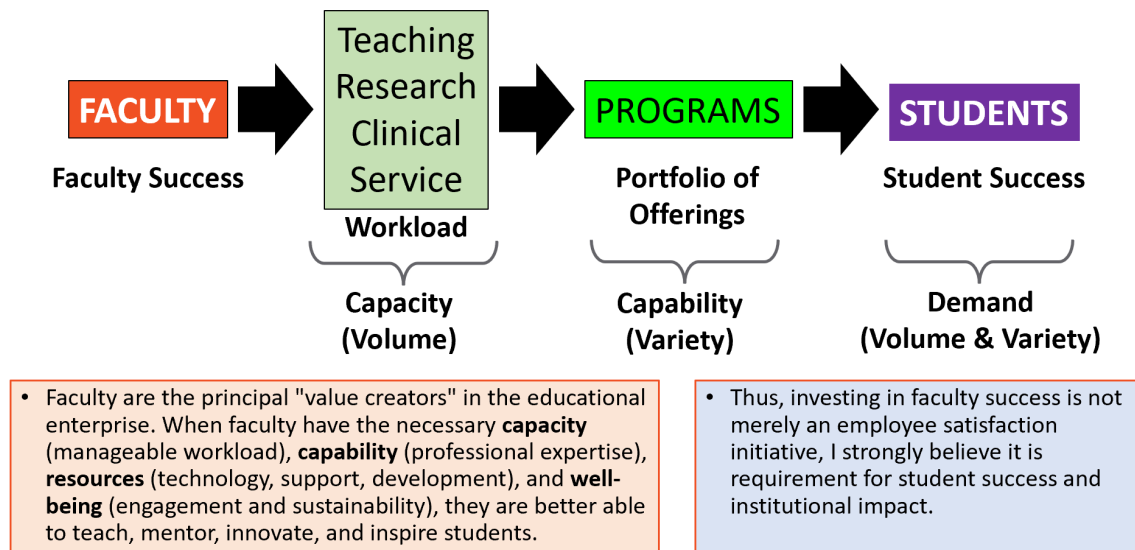
The value stream runs from Faculty through **Programs** to Students with essential support from Staff. Faculty carry out teaching, research, clinical work, and service; that work is organized into Programs; and Programs are what students actually experience. Therefore, **Student Success** is not possible without **Faculty Success**: the two are sequential, not parallel.

Faculty Success is the ability of faculty members to thrive personally and professionally while effectively teaching, mentoring, discovering (R&D), innovating, and serving in ways that maximize student success, advance institutional excellence, and create lasting societal impact. Therefore, Faculty Success is a prerequisite to Student Success.

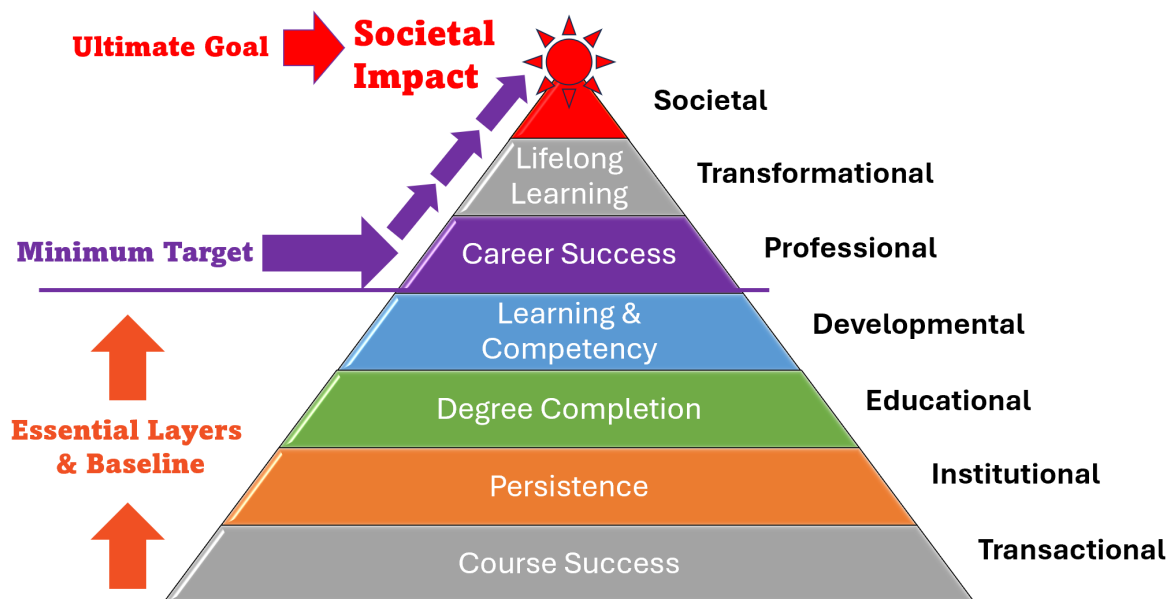
The Value Stream: From Faculty Success to Student Success

Faculty success shapes workload: the **capacity** (volume) and **capability** (variety) faculty bring to teaching, research, clinical work, and service. Faculty Workload, in turn, produces the portfolio of offerings available to students, which must match **demand** in both volume and variety.

Investing in faculty success is not merely an employee-satisfaction initiative; it is a requirement for student success and institutional impact. Faculty are the principal value creators in the educational enterprise. When faculty have the necessary capacity (manageable workload), capability (professional expertise), resources (technology, support, development), and well-being (engagement and sustainability), they are better able to teach, mentor, innovate, and inspire students.



Value Stream: Faculty Success is a prerequisite to Student Success



Student Success: What are your metrics?

Student Success: What Does It Mean for You?

Student success is not one thing. It spans seven conceptual layers, each asking a different question:

- Transactional: Did the student pass? (Course Success)
- Institutional: Did the student stay, showing continuous progress from one term to the next? (Persistence)
- Educational: Did the student complete the degree? Time to degree? (Degree Completion)
- Developmental: Did the student grow? (Learning and Competency)
- Professional: Can the student find a job and contribute to a career? (Career Success)
- Transformational: Has education changed the student's life? (Lifelong Learning)
- Societal: Does the student's success benefit others and society? (Societal Impact)

Metrics that Matter

Metrics are the compass of the AIM Framework. Without timely, reliable, and meaningful metrics, it is impossible to determine whether we are becoming more effective, more efficient, or more excellent. Every initiative should include clearly defined performance measures that enable us to assess progress, identify emerging challenges, and make evidence-based decisions before small issues become major problems.

Effectiveness is measured by the extent to which desired outcomes are achieved. Efficiency is measured by the resources, time, and effort required to achieve those outcomes. Excellence is measured by the institution's ability to improve the quality, consistency, and sustainability of those outcomes over time through continuous assessment and innovation.

Because institutional decisions occur continuously, metrics must also be timely, actionable, and transparent. Annual reports alone are insufficient for managing a dynamic university. We need dashboards and performance metrics that are aligned with what we do at different levels across the institution so that we are provided with regular and timely feedback, allowing corrective actions to be taken in a timely manner rather than after opportunities have been lost.

In the AIM Framework, alignment establishes direction, metrics measure progress, and continuous assessment drives improvement.



Selecting “actionable” metrics is essential for measuring performance, identifying opportunities for improvement, and guiding timely action (our response).

Below is a **sample set of student success metrics** at various levels. Each metric can trigger different responses and improvement strategies through different institutional business processes.

Sample Set of Student Success Metrics

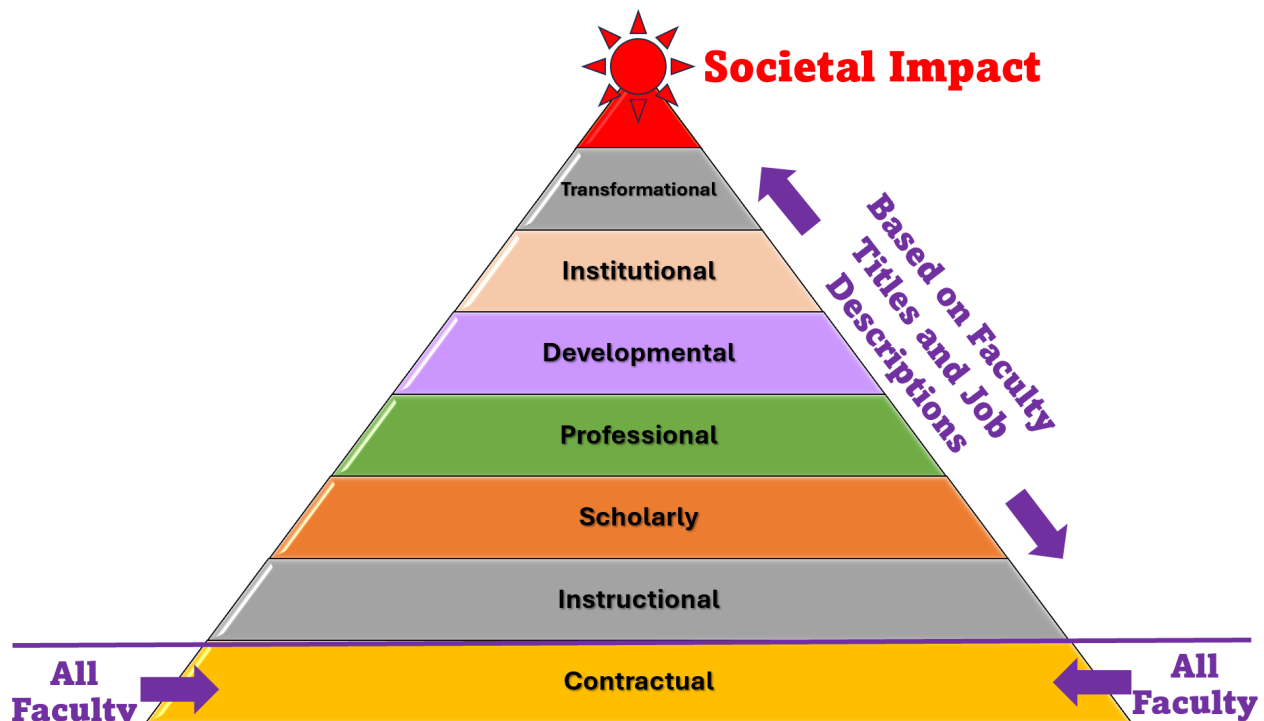
#	Level	Metrics
1	Course Completion: Passing a course.	Grade (C or better)
2	Academic Performance: Achieving high grades.	GPA
3	Credit Accumulation: Successfully earning credits on schedule.	Credits completed, time to completion
4	Persistence: Returning each semester until graduation.	Retention rate
5	Graduation: Completing a degree.	Graduation rate
6	Timely Completion: Graduating efficiently with minimal excess credits.	Time-to-degree
7	Learning Outcomes: Demonstrating mastery of knowledge and skills.	Assessment of learning
8	Competency Development: Developing transferable competencies (critical thinking, communication, quantitative reasoning).	Competency assessments
9	Professional Readiness: Being prepared for employment or graduate education.	Placement rates, employer feedback
10	Career Success: Achieving meaningful employment and career advancement.	Employment, salary, promotions
11	Economic Mobility: Improving one's economic opportunities relative to starting point.	Earnings mobility, debt-to-income
12	Personal Development: Growing intellectually, emotionally, ethically, and socially.	Self-efficacy, leadership, resilience
13	Student Well-being: Thriving physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally while learning.	Well-being surveys, belonging
14	Student Engagement: Being actively involved in learning and campus life.	Engagement measures
15	Sense of Belonging: Feeling valued, connected, and included within the institution.	Belonging and climate surveys
16	Agency & Empowerment: Becoming a self-directed learner capable of navigating complexity.	Self-regulation, autonomy
17	Lifelong Learning: Developing habits and motivation for continuous learning beyond graduation.	Continued education, professional development
18	Civic Success: Becoming an engaged citizen who contributes to communities.	Civic participation, service
19	Human Flourishing: Living a meaningful, healthy, purposeful, and fulfilling life.	Flourishing indices
20	Societal Impact: Using one's education to create positive impact for others and society.	Community impact, innovation, leadership

Now, let's follow a similar format to discuss **Faculty Success**.

Faculty Success Metrics depend on Faculty Title and Corresponding Job Description (Faculty Workload):

- Contractual: Applies to all faculty members. Have they fulfilled assigned duties?
- Instructional: Did they teach effectively?
- Scholarly: Did they produce meaningful research/discovery/scholarly output?
- Professional: Did they grow and advance in their career? Did they contribute in terms of service?
- Developmental: Did they mentor and develop students?
- Institutional: Did they contribute to the university's mission through various levels of engagement?
- Transformational: Did they improve the lives of students and colleagues?
- Societal: Did their work create lasting value for society?

Once faculty titles and workload assignments are appropriately aligned, the next question becomes: How do we measure Faculty Success? More specifically, what metrics best reflect the level of faculty performance?



Faculty Success: Metrics depend on Faculty Title and Corresponding Job Description

Below is a sample set of faculty success metrics at various levels. Each metric can trigger different responses and improvement strategies through different institutional business processes.

Sample Set of Faculty Success Metrics

#	Level	Metrics
1	Job Performance: Fulfilling assigned responsibilities.	Workload completion, compliance
2	Teaching Effectiveness: Delivering high-quality instruction.	Student evaluations, peer reviews
3	Student Learning: Helping students achieve learning outcomes.	Learning assessments, course success
4	Scholarly Productivity: Producing impactful research and creative works.	Grant, Dissertation/Thesis Advising, Publications, Citations, Scholarly Research Indices
5	Service: Contributing to the department, institution, and profession.	Committee work, leadership, outreach
6	Career Progression: Advancing professionally through promotion and tenure.	Promotion, tenure, awards
7	Professional Growth: Continuously developing knowledge, skills, and teaching practices.	Professional development, certifications
8	Student Mentorship: Guiding students academically, professionally, and personally.	Mentoring outcomes, student achievements
9	Student Success Enablement: Creating conditions that help students persist, graduate, and thrive.	Retention, graduation, student engagement
10	Collaboration & Leadership: Building productive teams and advancing institutional initiatives.	Interdisciplinary work, leadership roles
11	Innovation: Improving curriculum, pedagogy, technology adoption, and educational practices.	New programs, instructional innovations
12	Faculty Well-being: Maintaining a healthy, sustainable, and fulfilling academic career.	Engagement, burnout, work-life balance
13	Organizational Contribution: Strengthening the institution's mission, culture, and operational excellence.	Institutional performance, strategic impact
14	Lifelong Scholarly Impact: Advancing knowledge, shaping future professionals, and influencing the discipline.	Legacy, influence, alumni success
15	Societal Impact: Improving society through education, research, innovation, and public engagement.	Community impact, policy influence, economic development

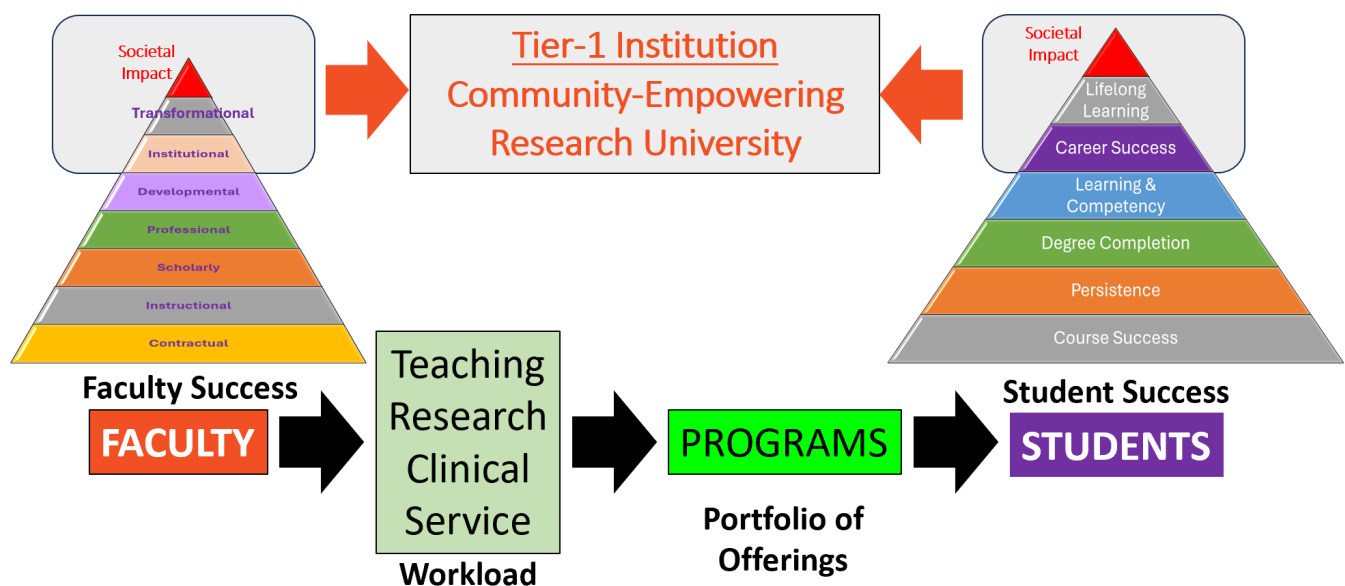
Faculty Development for Faculty Success

- **Reskilling Pathways:** Structured opportunities for faculty to build expertise in emerging fields, such as AI, data science, advanced technologies, health informatics, aligned to where new programs are heading.
- **Time to Retool:** Course buy-outs, sabbaticals, or reassigned time dedicated to curriculum redesign and skill-building, elimination of non-value added “service” assignments, not squeezed on top of a full workload.
- **Funded Development:** Seed funding, stipends, or professional development grants tied directly to program growth areas, not just individual initiatives.

- **Mentorship and Peer Learning:** Faculty who have already made a transition into new methods, technology, or fields supporting colleagues doing the same.
- **Recognition in Evaluation:** Contribution to institutional needs through faculty development counts toward promotion, tenure, and performance review (this is real work, not something done on the side).

From Faculty Success to Institutional Impact

Bringing the two pyramids together completes the value stream: Faculty Success drives Workload (Teaching, Research, Clinical, Service); Workload produces the Portfolio of Offerings (Programs); and Programs deliver Student Success. Sustained, this chain is what carries UTRGV toward its aspiration as a Tier-1, community-empowering research university.



Faculty Success and Student Success: Interdependent Drivers of Institutional Impact

Based on the **Principles of Academic Excellence**, everything up to this point has been about **WHY**: why alignment matters, why student success depends on faculty success, and why programs are the vehicle through which people, budget, and space become real value for students. That **WHY** is necessary, but it is not sufficient. Align, the first letter of AIM, is an operational discipline.

To act on it, we have to move from principle to practice: from **WHY** to **WHAT**: identifying, with precision, exactly where our organizational elements fail to reinforce one another, and what specific initiatives will close those gaps. The next section makes that shift. It is intentionally more granular and more operational than what has come before, because this is where alignment stops being a principle and becomes a plan. And deliberately, the **HOW** behind each initiative has been left open, to be determined and developed collectively.

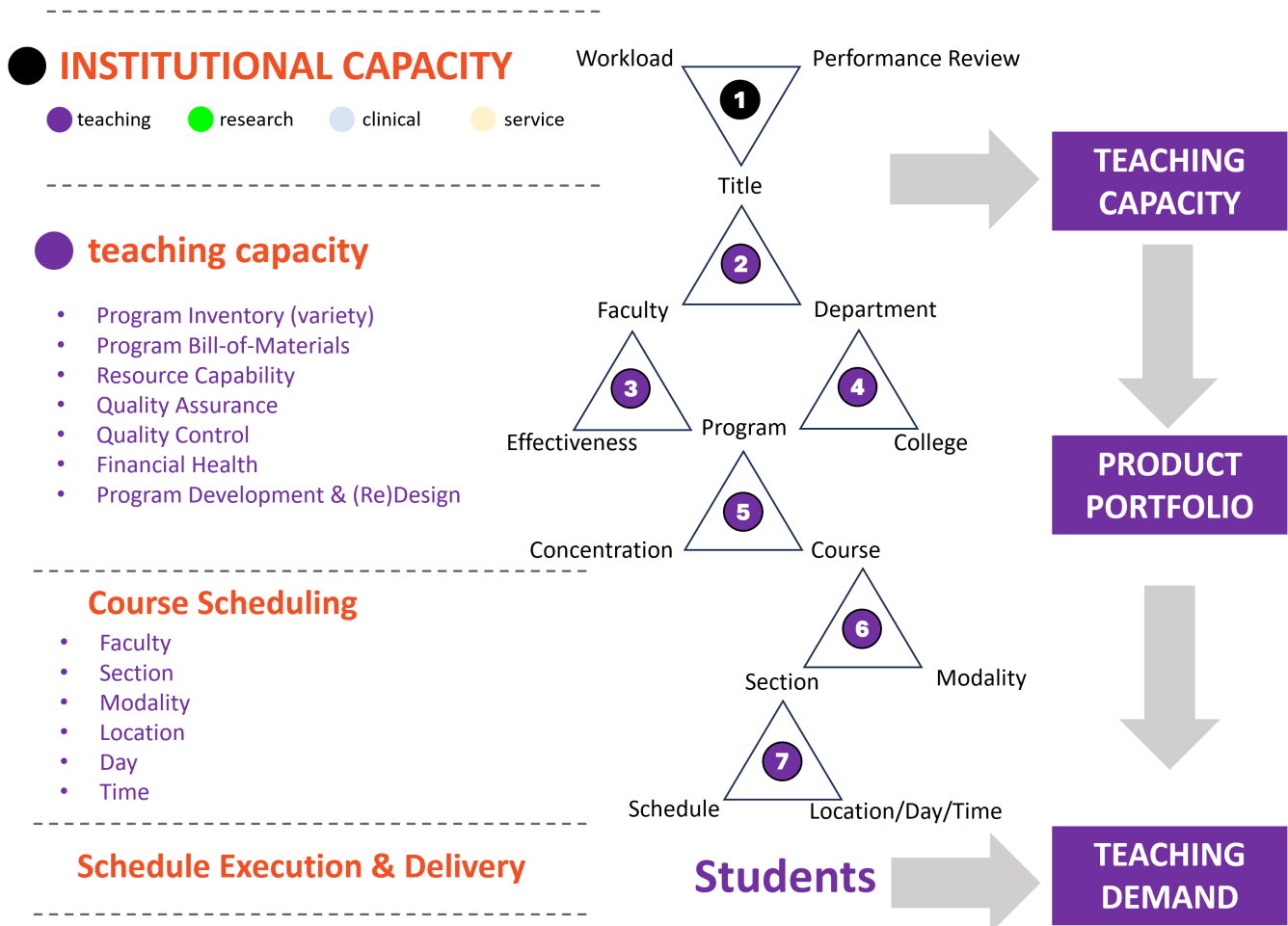


3. Operationalizing Alignment for Teaching: The Seven Triangles

Based on my initial assessment of the operational factors that most directly shape Faculty Success and Student Success in **teaching**, I have identified Seven Alignment Triangles that are founded on the Seven Principles for Academic Excellence. Each triangle represents three organizational elements whose alignment directly affects institutional performance in academic programs, curriculum, teaching, student experience, and faculty teaching experience. The triangles are not isolated; each triangle hands off to the next through a single shared element, so alignment (similarly misalignment) in one triangle carries forward into the next. When the three elements within a triangle are aligned, they reinforce one another and support the outcomes we want. When they become misaligned, inefficiencies emerge, resources are wasted, decision making becomes harder, and institutional performance suffers.

The Seven Alignment Triangles presented here focus on the **teaching** mission, but the same structure can be extended to the **research** and **clinical** missions by adding the corresponding metrics and organizational elements to the faculty workload dimension. Strategic alignment across **teaching**, **research**, **clinical**, and **service** converts institutional resources into measurable outcomes; misalignment in any of them diminishes faculty effectiveness, student success, operational efficiency, and ultimately institutional impact.

The Seven Alignment Triangles provide a practical framework for identifying misalignments, prioritizing improvement efforts, and developing targeted Alignment Initiatives. Rather than attempting to improve every aspect of the institution at once, this framework focuses attention on the critical relationships and the sequence connecting them, which drive faculty effectiveness, academic quality, operational efficiency, and ultimately student success.



Seven Alignment Triangles: Interdependent Organizational Elements

- Title • Workload • Performance Review:** Institutional capacity defined in terms of teaching, research, clinical, and service functions based on faculty titles and associated job descriptions and performance expectations.
- Faculty • Title • Department:** Disciplinary expertise matched to departmental home.
- Faculty • Effectiveness • Program:** Faculty credentialing and expertise matched to program requirements, faculty-program fit to deliver programs effectively.
- Program • Department • College:** Program review and continuous improvement drives changes in organizational structures that best support program excellence for student success.
- Program • Concentration • Course:** Curricula intentionally designed for student outcomes.
- Course • Section • Modality:** Size, number, and delivery modality of sections guided by student demand, learning effectiveness, and financial metrics.
- Section • Schedule • Location/Day/Time:** Proactive scheduling based on actual student data that shortens time-to-degree.

I often refer to these as the "**Bermuda Triangles**" because much like the legendary region where ships and airplanes mysteriously disappeared, institutional resources, time, and opportunities can quietly disappear whenever the three elements of a triangle become misaligned. The objective is to identify these areas of misalignment before they erode faculty productivity, student success, and institutional effectiveness.

Review the Seven Alignment Triangles graphic from top to bottom. The **Seven Triangles** help us visualize and operationalize the **Seven Principles for Academic Excellence**; they trace a single continuous **value chain**, not seven separate concerns.

- **Triangle 1** establishes **Institutional Capacity**: the total teaching, research, clinical, and service capacity we have to work with, before any of it is committed to a specific mission.
- **Triangles 2 through 4** take the teaching share of that capacity and convert it into a **Product Portfolio**: the actual programs we can offer, built from faculty correctly matched to title, department, and program.
- **Triangles 5 through 7** take that portfolio and turn it into **Teaching Demand fulfilled**: sections sized to real need and the schedule leads students to be in the right room at the right place, and at the right time. Since each triangle hands off to exactly one triangle after it, in case of a misalignment anywhere in the chain, it does not stay contained; it travels downstream until it reaches the student as a closed section, a canceled class, or a semester of delay.

Misalignments are not random; they are **symptoms** of a **root cause** lost somewhere upstream in the value chain, in one of our Bermuda Triangles. Left untraced, that root cause keeps resurfacing downstream as a burden our staff absorb, and ultimately as a bad outcome for our students. Our goal is to find the root cause, not just treat the symptoms, so we are not fighting the same fire twice.

The remainder of this section introduces each Alignment Triangle, discusses the types of misalignments that commonly occur, and outlines initiatives that can strengthen alignment across the university. These seven areas do not operate independently; together they form an integrated operational system running from Faculty through Schedule to the Student, which is our value stream. Together, these initiatives represent the first operational phase (**Alignment**) of implementing the **AIM** Framework.

Principles to Triangles to Initiatives

Principle 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.

Triangle 1: Title • Workload • Performance Review

- 1.1 HOP Policies (UTS/UTRGV, jointly with Health Affairs)
- 1.2 For each college, discipline-specific Titles/Metrics/Targets, compiled into an Annual Performance “Work Plan” as part of College Policies
- 1.3 Activity-Based Performance Tracking (A digital platform)
 - 1.3.1 Teaching Performance & Student Metrics
 - 1.3.2 Research Performance Metrics
 - 1.3.3 Clinical Performance Metrics
 - 1.3.4 Service Performance Metrics
- 1.4 Annual Faculty Teaching Capacity Adjustment, based on prior AY's performance
- 1.5 Annual Faculty “Research Space” Adjustment, based on prior AY's research performance
- 1.6 Annual Evaluations and Merit Raise Model
- 1.7 Data Feed: Digital Measures/FPT alignment with institutional data
- 1.8 Buy-Out Policies: course and time buy-out

Principle 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.

Triangle 2: Faculty • Title • Department

- 2.1 Faculty Hiring Model: demand versus capacity
- 2.2 Faculty Hiring “Lanes”: Traditional Tenure-Track/Tenured; Lecturer/Teaching; Research Faculty
- 2.3 Faculty Offer Letters: development, resource allocation (start-up), routing, and approval
- 2.4 Faculty Start-Up: resource allocation, timeline of use, performance and resource-usage tracking
- 2.5 Memorandum of Appointment (MOA) annual process: renewals and non-renewals
- 2.6 Faculty Termination Process
- 2.7 Faculty Administrative Roles: validation of need, compensation model, and annual review (e.g., Associate Deans, Chairs, Associate Chairs)
- 2.8 Faculty Endowments and Fellowships (with Institutional Advancement): appointments & terms, expectations, performance monitoring

Principle 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.

Triangle 3: Faculty • Effectiveness • Program

- 3.1 Faculty Credentialing for Teaching
- 3.2 Special Course Formats and Arrangements: approval, faculty credentialing, and faculty workload
- 3.3 Graduate Faculty Appointment: Faculty expertise matched to Masters and Doctoral programs
- 3.4 Faculty-Course Teaching Portfolio Analysis: type of courses (required, elective, core), frequency of teaching, type of modalities, enrollment trends,
- 3.5 Faculty Teaching Performance Analysis: variance across sections, per course, per faculty, across multiple semesters, student evaluation

Principle 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.

Triangle 4: Program • Department • College

- 4.1 Program Review and Continuous Improvement: review frequency, metrics (beyond compliance), revenue vs. cost analysis, continue/improve/sunset decisions
- 4.2 New Program: development protocol, timelines, and approval process
- 4.3 Program “Performance” in the market: job placement, salary, career longevity
- 4.4 Program Policies and Requirements: theoretical/planned versus actuals, policies not followed/waived
- 4.5 Rebranding of existing programs, departments, and colleges for modernization with minimal new resources, targeting activities with higher revenue potential
- 4.6 Department-College “fit”: strategic moves of departments/ faculty fully or partially with dual appointments, creation of new departments, new colleges.

Principle 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.

Triangle 5: Program • Concentration • Course

- 5.1 Student Learning Outcomes
- 5.2 Compliance with Roadmaps: substitutions/waivers, planned-not-offered courses, not-planned/offered courses, overrides at both undergrad and graduate levels
- 5.3 Curricular Financial Health Analysis (Section/Course/Concentration/Program/College: Red-Green \$ status)
- 5.4 Program-Concentration-Course: historical enrollment (seat) analysis for optimization, continue/sunset/revise decisions (utilize 5.3 financial metrics)
- 5.5 Core Curriculum as a “Program”: reducing from 42 to 30 hours (fewer course choices/alternatives, standardized syllabi per course, AI literacy)

Principle 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.

Triangle 6: Course • Section • Modality

- 6.1 Review of Course-to-Programs contribution in terms of required, elective
- 6.2 Discrepancies among course rotations, program of study, and roadmaps
- 6.3 Historical analysis of section-enrollment-faculty patterns and metrics (utilize 3.4 faculty teaching portfolio)
- 6.4 Historical analysis of section-modality-faculty patterns and metrics (utilize 3.4 faculty teaching portfolio)
- 6.5 Elective Course Review: continue/improve/sunset (volume & variety per program)

Principle 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.

Triangle 7: Section • Schedule • Location/Day/Time

- 7.1 Student-Centered Course Scheduling: new scheduling grid for Fall 2027
- 7.2 Schedule Impact Metrics (student, space, faculty, travel, time)
 - 7.2.1 Schedule type, instruction method, and section size
 - 7.2.2 Deviations from planned versus actual
 - 7.2.3 Section demand-capacity: “seat” management
 - 7.2.4 Course cancellation process and metrics
- 7.3 “Base Campus”—driven scheduling models: faculty and student perspectives
- 7.4 Teaching Space Usage: space category (THECB code: classroom, laboratory, computer lab,...), space metrics, capacity usage rate (students/room per day)

4. Why Start with Triangle 1: Title•Workload•Performance Review ?

Effective faculty evaluation is not merely an administrative function; it is the foundational mechanism through which an institution ensures that its academic workforce is correctly classified, appropriately deployed, and meaningfully assessed. Yet at many institutions, the systems governing faculty titles, workload assignments, and performance review criteria have evolved independently over time, producing structural disconnects (*misalignments*) that undermine both faculty development/success and institutional accountability/impact.

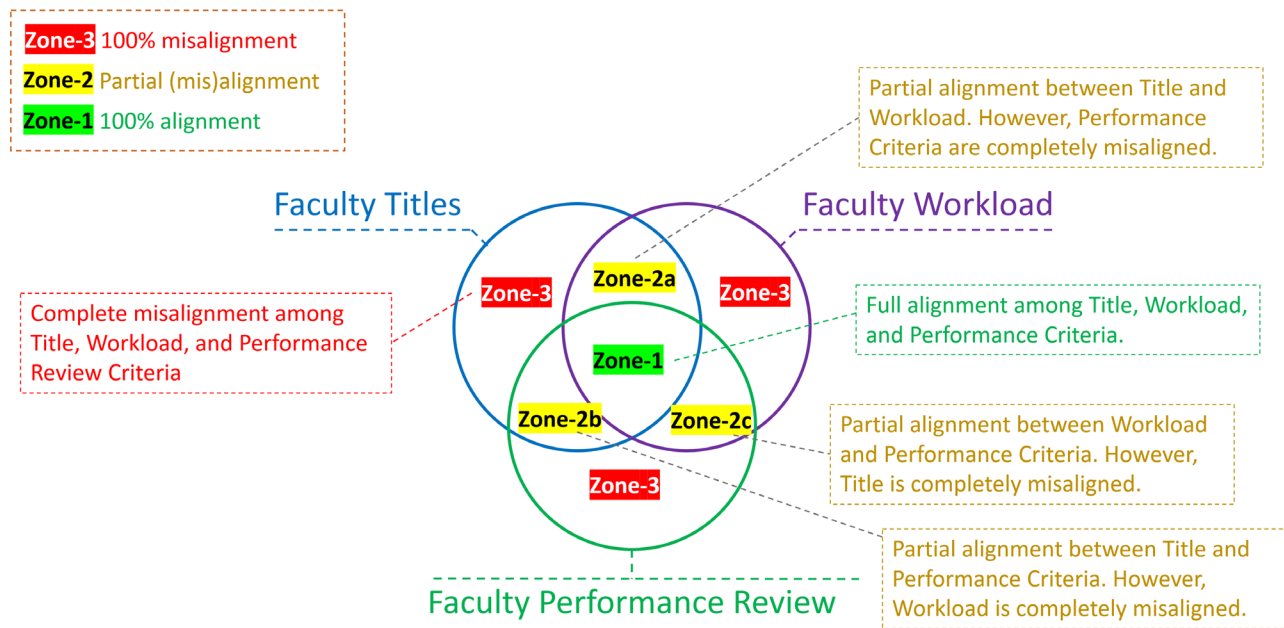
This section articulates the why behind Triangle-1, establishing what alignment of faculty titles, workload, and performance review means and why it matters. The how remains intentionally undeveloped at this stage, as it is meant to emerge through collaborative dialogue across colleges, schools, and academic units. Importantly, this framework does not replace or pause any of the faculty workload policy work already underway. Rather, it offers an alignment strategy that can be embedded into that existing work as a conceptual backbone that strengthens and gives coherence to the policies and processes already in development (“Do not reinvent the wheel”).

Built on the principle of alignment, faculty titles, workload expectations, and performance evaluation criteria must function as an integrated system, not as separate administrative tracks. When all three elements are in full alignment, faculty members receive clear signals about what is expected of them, and institutions are equipped to evaluate performance in a manner that is fair, transparent, and consistent with institutional mission.

Definitions:

- **Faculty Titles:** the official classification that defines a faculty member’s academic role and responsibilities
- **Faculty Workload:** the expected distribution of effort across teaching, research, clinical activity, and service
- **Performance Review Criteria:** the standards and metrics used to evaluate whether a faculty member is fulfilling their role

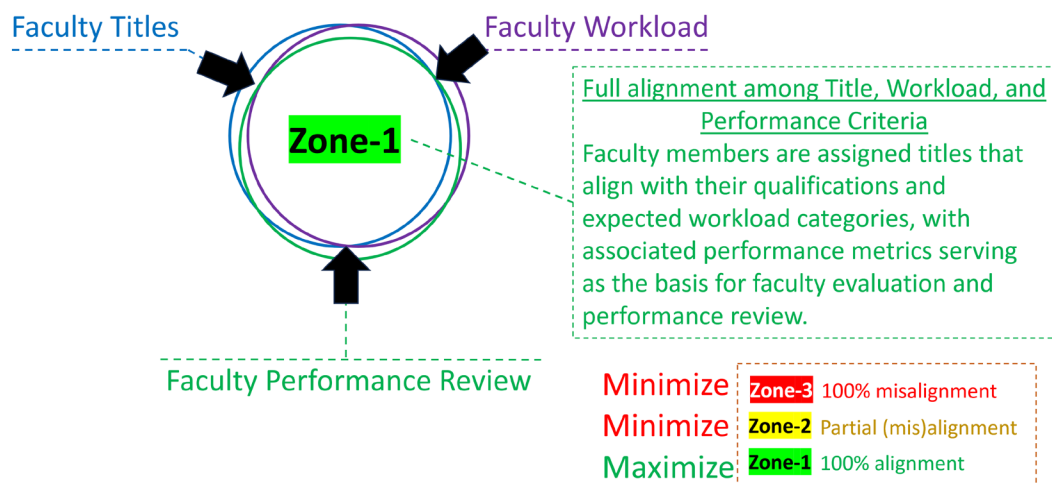
When these three elements are misaligned (i.e., *when a faculty member’s title does not reflect their actual activities, when their workload expectations are inconsistent with their title, or when their performance is evaluated against criteria that do not match their assigned responsibilities*) the evaluation process produces neither useful feedback nor equitable outcomes. It rather creates an unhealthy, stressful work environment.



Misaligned Faculty Titles, Workload, and Performance Review

A zone-based model is shown above to categorize the degree of alignment present in any given faculty configuration:

- **Zone 3 (100% Misalignment):** Title, Workload, and Performance Review Criteria are all out of alignment with one another. This represents the most dysfunctional state of the faculty evaluation system and should be prioritized for remediation.
- **Zone 2 (Partial Misalignment):** Two of the three elements are aligned, but the third is inconsistent. Three sub-states are possible: title and workload are aligned but performance criteria are not; workload and performance criteria are aligned but the title is not; or title and performance criteria are aligned but the workload does not reflect either.
- **Zone 1 (100% Alignment):** Title, Workload, and Performance Review Criteria are fully consistent with one another. This is the target state for every faculty member.



Maximizing Alignment of Titles, Workload, and Performance Review

The goal is to minimize Zone 3 and Zone 2 configurations across the faculty roster while maximizing Zone 1. This requires each college and school to systematically audit its faculty activities, reconcile titles with actual roles, map workload expectations to recognized categories, and establish clear performance metrics that correspond to each faculty workload profile.

Critically, this is not a one-time exercise. Faculty roles evolve, program needs shift, and individual circumstances change. The framework therefore treats Zone-1 alignment as a dynamic target; one that must be actively monitored, maintained, and adjusted on an annual basis as part of the ongoing faculty evaluation cycle.

The second step is an important dimension of the faculty evaluation problem: the relationship between recurring annual reviews and the major milestone reviews that mark faculty career progression. At many institutions, these review processes exist in isolation; annual reviews are conducted as compliance exercises, while third-year reviews, tenure reviews, and promotion reviews draw on different criteria, different evidence, and different expectations. The result is a faculty career trajectory that lacks developmental coherence.

The Faculty Performance Review: Career Progression

In Triangle-1, the Annual Review (AR) is not a standalone, isolated event; it establishes a cumulative foundation upon which all subsequent reviews (3rd Year Review, Tenure Review, Promotion Review, and post-tenure evaluations) are constructed. These subsequent reviews build upon that foundation with additional criteria that focus on the cumulative impact and trajectory of a faculty member's contributions over time, enabling a broader level of analysis. Such analysis is not simply whether expectations were met year-to-year, but whether the body of work, taken as a whole, reflects the level of scholarly, clinical, or creative impact the institution expects at that stage of a faculty career. These aspects of faculty development and career growth should be discussed with faculty during their annual reviews beyond the annual workload metrics.

The faculty performance review lifecycle is envisioned as follows:

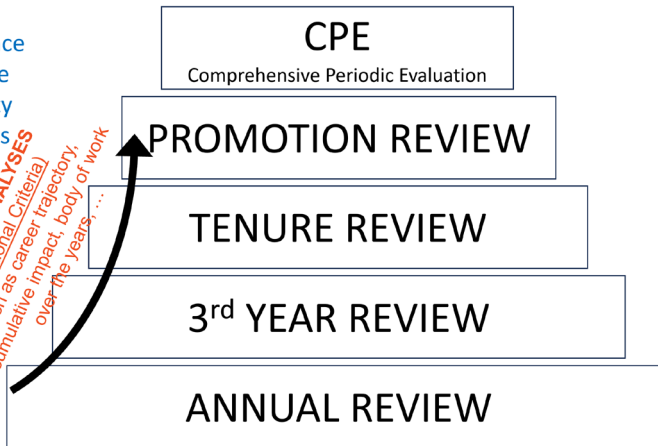
- **Annual Review (AR):** Conducted each year, the AR provides timely, actionable feedback on faculty performance relative to their aligned workload and metrics. Annual Reviews should ensure continuity of faculty performance expectations across the faculty career.
- **3rd Year Review:** Draws directly from the cumulative record established through Annual Reviews. Faculty members who have met or exceeded expectations are well-positioned to demonstrate progress at 3rd year review.
- **Tenure Review:** Built upon the longitudinal evidence produced through annual and third-year review processes. A coherent, annually documented performance record transforms the tenure review from a high-stakes single event into a well-supported culmination of demonstrated achievement.
- **Promotion Review:** Similarly grounded in the cumulative AR record, with the trajectory of performance over time serving as the primary basis for promotion decisions.
- **Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation (CPE):** For tenured faculty beyond the promotion milestone, the CPE ensures that long-term faculty members continue to be evaluated against aligned, meaningful criteria.

The Annual Review serves as the foundation of the faculty performance review lifecycle, providing actionable feedback each year that helps faculty stay on track and prepare for success at their next career milestone.

START HERE



BROADER ANALYSES
 (Additional Criteria)
 Such as career trajectory,
 cumulative impact, body of work
 over the years, ...

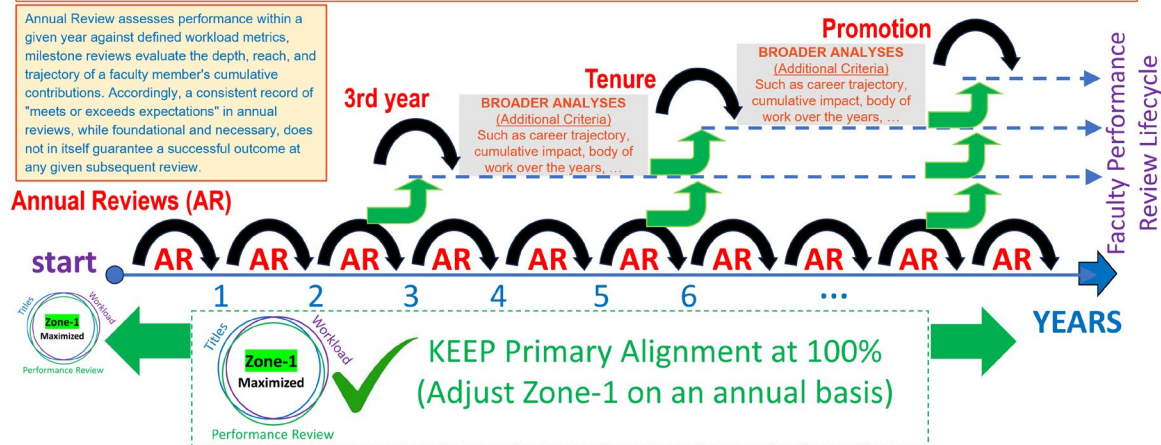


Annual Review assesses performance within a given year against defined workload metrics, milestone reviews evaluate the depth, reach, and trajectory of a faculty member's cumulative contributions. Accordingly, a consistent record of "meets or exceeds expectations" in annual reviews, while foundational and necessary, does not in itself guarantee a successful outcome at any given subsequent review.

An Integrated Approach to Faculty Performance Review

The Annual Review assesses performance within a given year against defined workload metrics, milestone reviews evaluate the depth, reach, and trajectory of a faculty member's cumulative contributions. Accordingly, a consistent record of "meets or exceeds expectations" in annual reviews, while foundational and necessary, does not in itself guarantee a successful outcome at any given subsequent review.

The **Annual Review (AR)** is the **BUILDING BLOCK** of the faculty performance review lifecycle, providing actionable feedback each year that helps faculty stay on track and prepare for success at their next career milestone.



Annual Review Based Faculty Performance Review Model

The effectiveness of Triangle-1 lies in its insistence on continuity. Because each Annual Review is conducted against the same aligned framework (Zone-1 titles, workload expectations, and performance metrics), faculty members receive consistent signals throughout their careers. There are no surprises during a review process. There are no mismatches between what was expected during annual reviews and what is evaluated at promotion.

This also has important implications for faculty development. When Annual Reviews are genuinely actionable and grounded in clear metrics and honest assessment, then they become tools for growth and faculty success rather than administrative formalities. Faculty members who receive candid, criterion-based feedback each year are better equipped to build the record that milestone reviews demand. The Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Research will provide faculty career development opportunities based on the gaps identified during annual reviews.

Implementing this framework at the college and school level requires a structured process that begins with a systematic review of current faculty configurations and concludes with the establishment of annual work plans grounded in Zone-1 alignment.

The following sequence of actions are required at the college level to operationalize Triangle-1:

1. Identify all faculty activity categories relevant to the college's programs, interpreted broadly to include teaching, research, clinical work, and outreach.
2. Determine the most appropriate faculty title for each activity category.
3. Review the faculty roster and current activities to identify title-activity misalignments, then either revise titles or adjust expected activities to achieve alignment.
4. For each appropriately titled faculty member, define their workload by mapping expected activities to the recognized workload categories of Teaching, Research, Clinical, and Service.
5. For each activity within each workload category for each applicable faculty title, establish clear metrics and annual targets.
6. Compile these elements into an annual work plan in the beginning of the academic year for each faculty member, which becomes the basis for their Annual Review at the end of the academic year

We Need an Effective Faculty Information System to Eliminate Administrative Burden

Sustaining this framework at scale requires infrastructure. Metrics and targets should be captured digitally and updated in near real time, with minimal data entry burden placed on individual faculty members. College- and discipline-specific business rules embedded in a Faculty Information System (FIS) can assist with automated performance analysis, flagging misalignments, and tracking progress toward targets over time.

Conclusion: Impact of Triangle-1

Triangle-1 reflects a straightforward but consequential principle: faculty members perform best, and institutions evaluate most fairly, when titles, workload, and performance criteria form a coherent whole. When that coherence (alignment) is sustained over time through a rigorous Annual Review (AR) process, milestone reviews become meaningful and faculty development becomes a continuous, well-supported journey rather than a series of disconnected high-stakes events with unnecessary stress.

The goal is not to add administrative burden. It is to ensure that the systems already in place (evaluation, review, and promotion) are doing the work they are intended to do in perfect alignment: supporting faculty success, ensuring institutional accountability, and sustaining the academic mission with the highest impact. All leads to student success.



Can Saygin, Ph.D.

(Pronunciation: John Sigh-Guhn)

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

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV)

can.saygin@utrgv.edu

<https://www.utrgv.edu/academicaffairs/about/meet-the-evp/index.htm>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/drsaygin/>

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4728-996X> Scopus Author ID: 56091035900

Dr. Saygin currently serves as Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Senior Vice President for Research, and Dean of the Graduate College at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), where he has demonstrated transformative leadership in advancing the institution's research mission and graduate education. Under his leadership since August 2022, UTRGV has achieved remarkable growth in research performance, with annual sponsored project awards increasing from \$97 million in FY23 to \$200 million in FY24, research doctoral degrees growing by 58%, and significant expansion of research infrastructure and support services. UTRGV became eligible for National Research Support Funding (NRSF) from the State of Texas in May 2025, based on increased total research expenditures and research doctoral degrees. UTRGV closed FY25 with \$103.7 million in total research expenditures, which is a 71% increase compared to \$60.74 million in FY22. In Summer 2026, UTRGV achieved a major milestone by meeting the eligibility criteria for designation as an R1 institution in the 2028 Carnegie Classification cycle.

Prior to UTRGV, Dr. Saygin held several senior leadership positions at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), where he played a pivotal role in the institution's achievement of both Carnegie R1 status (Carnegie 2022 cycle) and National Research University Fund eligibility. His roles included Senior Associate Vice President for Research, Senior Vice Provost for University Planning, and Senior Vice Provost for Institutional Intelligence and Strategic Initiatives. He also served as Interim Dean of the Graduate School, where he achieved a 40% increase in graduate enrollment through strategic improvements to admissions processes and student support services.

Throughout his administrative career, Dr. Saygin has consistently exhibited the ability to drive institutional transformation through strategic vision, innovative leadership, and data-driven decision-making. He has developed comprehensive frameworks for research administration, implemented faculty and staff development programs, and established partnerships with national laboratories, federal agencies, and industry leaders.

As a scholar, Dr. Saygin holds a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the Middle East Technical University (Ankara, Turkey) with a focus on advanced manufacturing and automation. His academic career includes faculty positions at the University of Toledo-Ohio, Missouri University of Science and Technology, and UTSA. He has received numerous accolades for teaching excellence, including the UTSA President's Distinguished Achievement Award (2011) and the University of Texas System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award (2012). His research has been funded by prestigious organizations including the Air Force Research Lab, National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Education, and various industry partners.

Dr. Saygin's leadership philosophy emphasizes empowering faculty and staff through innovative support structures, fostering collaborative data-driven decision-making environments based on accountability, and maintaining a strong commitment to timely institutional transformation as the end goal. His experience advancing Hispanic-serving institutions, combined with his track record in academic administration and strategic planning, demonstrates his ability to lead complex organizations toward ambitious goals while maintaining focus on institutional mission and stakeholder needs.

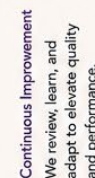
Principles for Academic Excellence

Seven Guiding Principles Aligned with AIM: **Align** • **Integrate** • **Maximize**

These principles guide our decisions and actions to advance faculty success, empower student success, and strengthen institutional impact.



Collaboration
We achieve more together across units and disciplines.



Continuous Improvement
We review, learn, and adapt to elevate quality and performance.



Evidence-Informed
We use data, research, and insight to drive better outcomes.



Integrity & Fairness
We ensure transparency, equity, and accountability in everything we do.



Student-Centered
Our decisions start and end with student success.

UTRGV

A Community-Empowering
Research University

Academic Year 2026-2027