

La network

the college of liberal arts newsletter



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Faculty Success
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Cover photo courtesy of UTRGV UMC

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from the
Dean’s Desk.

Ringling in Summer:
Celebrating a Semester of Achievement

As the semester drew to a close and the campus grew quieter, the steady progress of the Spring semester transitioned into the longer days of summer. As the final notes of commencement faded and the campus echoed with the memory of celebration, the momentum of the Spring semester blended gradually into the promise of a hot, vibrant summer. What a season it has been—an intense year, with many challenges and unexpected turns. But there have also been many reasons to celebrate. The academic term has brought a series of accomplishments that continue to shape our community. The accomplishments of this academic term shine as brightly as the sun on these summer days on campus.

Across disciplines, innovative research has taken center stage—redefining how we think about news media trust, health information in digital spaces, and the intricate dynamics of both human and animal behavior. Creative works have flourished, with original plays and insightful writings offering new perspectives on love, resilience, and self-discovery. Art’s power to invite reflection and foster connection has never felt so tangible.

The campus pulsed with collaboration at the end of the Spring semester, from award ceremonies honoring excellence in teaching, research, service, and community engagement, to gatherings that brought together scholars, staff, and students outside the classroom. The bonds formed around creative activities, shared meals, and collective milestones remind us that learning is as much about connection as it is about achievement.

Recognition poured in for student scholars, as cords and honors changed hands in ceremonies filled with emotion, hugs, and the glow of accomplishment. Many of our grad-

uate students earned admission to prestigious programs nationwide. Research grants, leadership appointments, and national awards highlighted a community ever on the rise. Workshops, conferences, and public projects showcased a passionate commitment to growth and outreach, while athletic and administrative appreciation days added a burst of energy and fun.

This season also marks a moment of heartfelt gratitude for the many retirements within our scholarly community that will take place at the end of the summer. We honor those whose lifelong dedication has shaped generations, their wisdom a lasting legacy. As they pass the torch, new faculty rise with renewed energy and vision, embracing the university’s mission and values, ensuring that our traditions continue to flourish as we venture into new stages of growth and excellence as a top research institution.

As we bask in these achievements under the summer sun, let us carry forward this spirit of the many great things we have achieved, knowing that the seeds sown this spring will flourish in the seasons to come, beyond the changing landscape and above difficulties. Here’s to a CLA community as bright and powerful as a midsummer day!

See you around, and ... ¡Vamos!

jd

José Dávila-Montes, PhD.
Dean · College of Liberal Arts
Professor of Translation and Interpreting



From left, CLA Dean José Dávila-Montes, Dr. Brent Campney, Dr. Dean Kyne, Dr. Maria G. Romero, Dr. Marcus Galle, and Dr. Danny Marrero

FACULTY RECOGNITION

CLA Faculty Excellence Awards

On May 01, 2025, the College of Liberal Arts at UTRGV hosted its annual Faculty Recognition Ceremony, celebrating outstanding achievements across teaching, research, service, and community engagement. Dean Dr. José Dávila-Montes congratulated the awardees and expressed appreciation for the faculty mentors, mentees, and the dedicated service of the college's three associate deans: **Drs. Pamela Anderson-Mejías, Sheila Dooley, and Russell Skowronek.**

Honorees included **Dr. Marcus Galle** (Teaching Excellence; Psychological Science), recognized for his student-centered instruction and exceptional evaluations; **Dr. Dean Kyne** (Sociology) and **Dr. Brent Campney** (Research Excellence; History), honored for nationally recognized work in disaster management and racial history, respectively; **Dr. Maria G. Romero** (Service Excellence; Psychological Science), for contributions across the her department, university and community; and **Dr. Danny Marrero** (Community Engagement Excellence; Philosophy), for impactful service-learning projects that supported vulnerable populations.

This event highlighted the College of Liberal Arts' commitment to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement. It also served as a moment of collective appreciation for faculty leadership and collaboration that continue to strengthen the college's mission and impact. The event was emceed by Dr. Dawid Wladyka, Interim Dean for Faculty Development.



From left back, Dr. Dawid Wladyka, Dean José Dávila-Montes, Dr. Russ Skowronek, (front) Dr. Sheila Dooley, and Monica Denny.



FACULTY RECOGNITION

Dr. Cecilia Montiel-Nava

Department of Psychological Science

The International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) has awarded its 2025 Cultural Diversity Award to Red Espectro Autista Latinoamérica (REAL) — the Latin American Autism Spectrum Network!

Dr. Cecilia Montiel-Nava, professor of Psychological Science at UTRGV, is a proud member of the REAL network and honored to contribute to this collaborative, community-centered effort spanning Latin America. This award carries special significance, as INSAR is the world's largest professional association dedicated to autism research, and the recognition underscores the value of culturally inclusive, cross-national initiatives.

Several of Dr. Montiel-Nava's PhD students at UTRGV have partnered with REAL, publishing first-author research based on data collected through the network. Their contributions have helped establish UTRGV as an active and respected partner in advancing autism research and advocacy across the region.

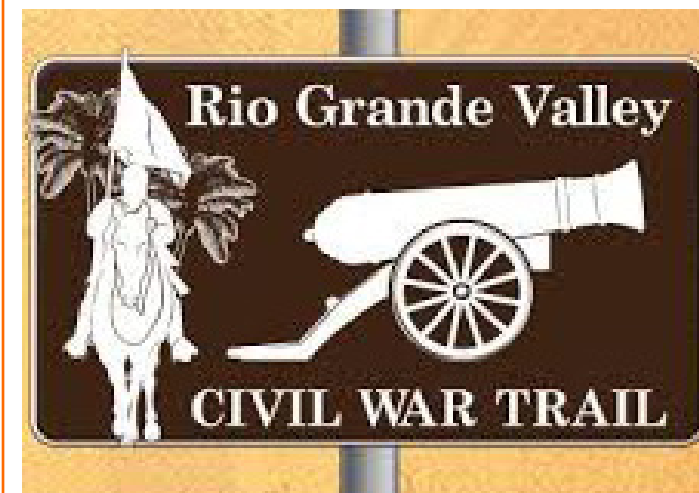
FACULTY RECOGNITION

Dr. Cecilio Ortiz-Garcia

School of Interdisciplinary Programs and Community Engagement

Provost Luis Zayas has appointed **Professor Cecilio Ortiz-Garcia, Ph.D.**, from the School of Interdisciplinary Programs and Community Engagement, as the next Houston Endowment Chair for Civic Engagement. His term will begin on September 1, 2025, and run through August 31, 2028.

In this role, Dr. Ortiz-Garcia will support the Center for Community Resilience Research, Innovation, and Advocacy in addressing complex socio-ecological and sociotechnical challenges in the Rio Grande Valley. His work will focus on strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities through civic engagement, research, and advocacy.



GRANT FUNDING

CHAPS Program

Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools

Congratulations to the CHAPS Program for receiving a \$17,000 grant from the Summerfield G. Roberts Foundation to support the Rio Grande Civil War Trail public enhancement project.

This initiative will help the installation of highway signs highlighting the region's Civil War history and support related traveling exhibits.

Visit: utrgv.edu/civilwar-trail



FACULTY RECOGNITION

Dr. Caleb Gonzalez

Department of Writing and Language Studies

Dr. Caleb Gonzalez was one of four directors of the 17th International Writing Across the Curriculum (IWAC) Conference, held July 16–19, 2025, at Colorado State University. As director, he helped manage every stage—from the call for proposals and submissions to housing logistics and program development.

This marks his second time in a leadership role for IWAC. When the 2020 conference was postponed due to COVID-19, Dr. Gonzalez played a key role in shifting the event online, successfully hosting it August 2–6, 2021.

He will also serve as co-editor of the 2025 IWAC proceedings, slated for release in late 2026 or early 2027 through the WAC Clearinghouse's Perspectives on Writing series.



FACULTY RECOGNITION

Dr. Ian Werkheiser

Department of Philosophy

Dr. Ian Werkheiser has been approved by the advisory board as the new co-director of the Center for Collaboration and Ethics, succeeding Dr. Gilson.

This transition preserves the Center's interdisciplinary ties with the Department of Philosophy while bringing Dr. Werkheiser's experience and expertise to its future initiatives.



CONFERENCE

Dr. Suzanne LaLonde

Department of Literature and Cultural Studies

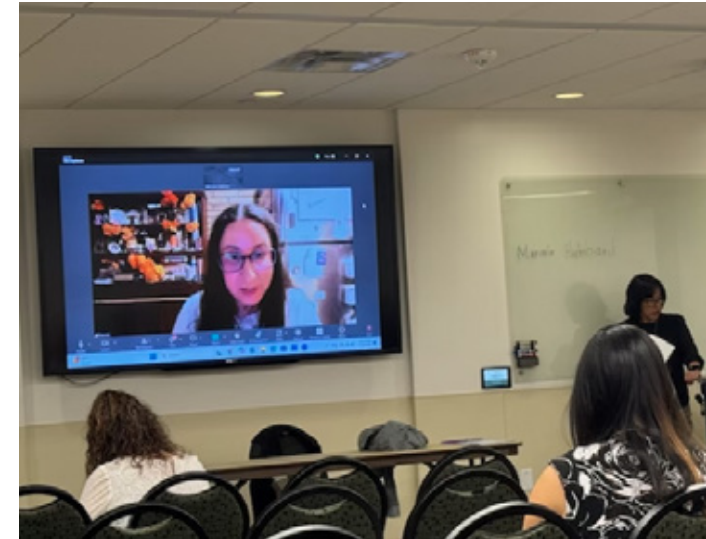
Department of Psychological Science

The Beyond Trauma Conference, held June 9–11, 2025, in Nice, France, brought together over 60 international scholars — including psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, filmmakers, psychoanalysts, anthropologists, and cultural theorists to explore creative, interdisciplinary approaches to moving beyond traumatic pasts.

Organized by **Associate Professor Suzanne LaLonde**, with support from the Departments of Literatures and Cultural Studies and Psychological Science at UTRGV, this three-day event fostered many meaningful exchanges across fields and cultures.

Together, they shared research—ranging from ethnographies and theoretical work to clinical practices—focused on fostering post-traumatic growth, resilience, resistance, retribution, and healing. Presenters explored approaches that shift the focus from trauma and PTSD toward processes of recovery and transformation—often through the arts—as employed by survivors themselves.

Special thanks to Dr. Michiyo Hirai, Dr. Khalid Aada, Mario Gil, Maria Montenegro, Danielle Barber, and Alexandre Gradoux from the Pediatric University Hospital of Nice for their contributions to the event's success.



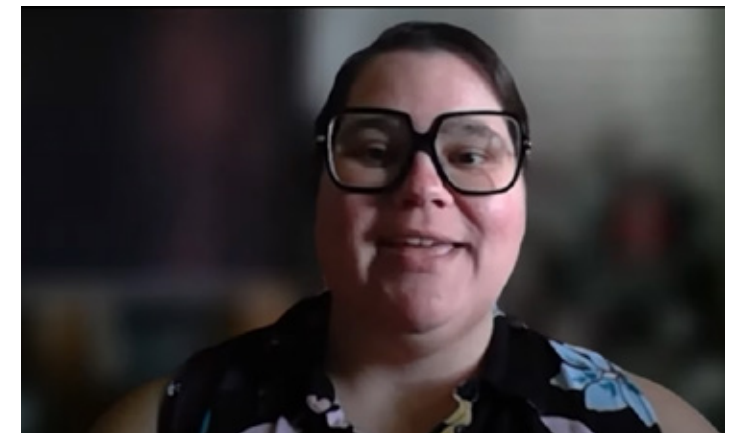
CONFERENCE

Lecturers Bonnie Garcia,

Norma (Denae) Dibrell, and Marcela Hebbard

Department of Writing and Language Studies

Lecturers Bonnie Garcia, Norma (Denae) Dibrell, and Marcela Hebbard presented at the 17th International Writing Across the Curriculum (IWAC) Conference, held July 16–19, 2025, at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. Their presentation “Navigating Interdisciplinary Collaborations in the Age of AI: A WAC Perspective” shared preliminary findings of their IRB-approved study, which explored how interdisciplinary faculty integrate AI across the curriculum to support student success. Their session contributed to the ongoing scholarly dialogue on the role of AI in



education. The team plans to submit a chapter proposal based on their presentation to the conference proceedings edited collection.

CONFERENCE

SIPCE

The School of Interdisciplinary Programs and Community Engagement (SIPCE) hosted its Fourth Annual Conference for Interdisciplinary Research on April 24–25, 2025, at the Region One Education Center.

This year's theme, From Ethical Challenges to Ethical Solutions: Navigating the Complexities of Interdisciplinary Research, featured a keynote lecture from Dr. Erika Bsumek, Professor and Temple Chair in History at The University of Texas at Austin.



PUBLICATION

Dr. Ben Wasike

Department of Communication

“Influencing the news: How social media influencers affect news media trust” in *Information, Communica-*

tion & Society, 1–18.

PUBLICATION

Dr. Minzhi Ye

School of Social Work & Department of Sociology

“Selective Sharing and Social Bonding: A Qualitative Study of Online Health Information Behaviour Among Older Adults in Shanghai,” in *Behaviour & Information Technology*.



WORKSHOPS

Dr. Mi-son Kim

Dr. Dongkyu Kim

The Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis

The Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis (CSRPA) recently hosted two STATA workshops—Basic and Advanced—during the spring semester, aimed at enhancing data analysis skills among students and faculty.



The Advanced STATA Workshop, held on Friday, April 18, was co-led by **Dr. Mi-son Kim** and **CSRPA Associate Director Dr. Dongkyu Kim**. The session was a resounding success, covering advanced topics such as macros, loops, data compilation, and the generation of regression tables. Participants left with practical tools and deeper knowledge to support their coursework and research projects.



RETREAT

Department of Spanish

The Department of Spanish held its first retreat, offering faculty and staff a chance to unwind and connect outside of campus. The group visited Shary Road Alpacas and Events in Mission, where they enjoyed time with nature, great company, and wellness activities before closing out the semester.



STUDENT SUCCESS

Dominic Kyei

Department of Sociology | MA Disaster Studies

Dominic Kyei successfully defended his master's thesis, "Understanding Wildfire Risk Perception, Evacuation Readiness, and Preparedness Information Awareness in the United States." His research explored how psychological, social, and cultural factors influence public response to large-scale wildfire events.

Dominic earned his degree through the Disaster Studies MA program in the Department of Sociology. This fall, he will begin a fully funded PhD program in Public Administration at the University of Kansas. His thesis committee included **Dr. William Donner (Chair)**, **Dr. Dean Kyne**, and **Dr. Arlett Lomeli**.



STUDENT SUCCESS

Cecilia Solís-Bautista

Department of Writing & Language Studies |
MA in Spanish Translation & Interpreting

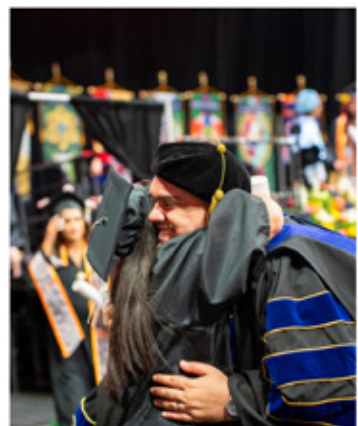
Cecilia Solís-Bautista, presented her research paper, "Form and Meaning in Federico García Lorca's English Poetry Translations," at the 78th Annual Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, hosted by the University of Kentucky.



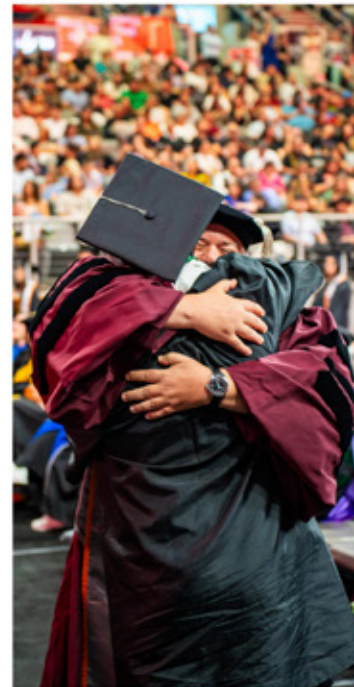
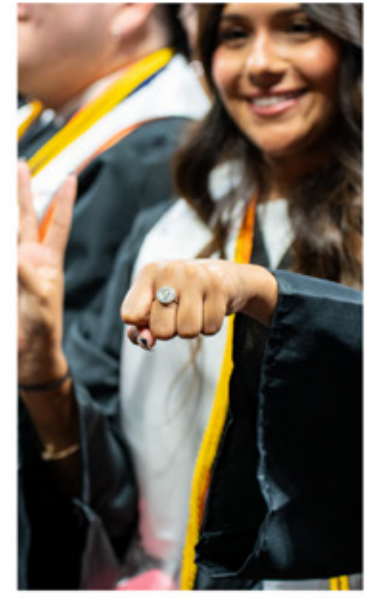
SPRING GRADUATION

2025

Class of



Photos courtesy of UTRGV UMC



STUDENT SUCCESS

CLA STUDENTS

UTRGV ENGAGED SCHOLAR SYMPOSIUM



Melina Lara
One-Act Play:
Flame

This piece explores the duality of love through the dynamics between three characters and two relationships. It highlights how love can be passionate, comforting, and warm but also has the capacity to be destructive, hurtful, and cruel.

Flame features queer and Latino presentation, as well as the realities of domestic violence and abuse within relationships. Lara invites the audience to engage beyond the script, creating a story that is raw, human, and offers space for reflection.

Concepcion Perez
Creative Writing:
You and I Merging



Through this piece, readers are invited into a reflective exploration of emotion, connection, and the continuous journey of self-understanding through art.

“My artwork is meant to showcase true and pure introspection and how that bridges the gap between being and the outside world. I attempt to make myself and others feel safe with my artwork.”

Sasha Rivera

Poster Presentation:
Patterns of Resilience in Latine Sexual and Gender Minority Adults with Discriminatory Childhood Experiences

With the guidance of **Maricela Galdamez** and **Dr. Charak**, Sasha Rivera has showcased Maricela’s previous work with a new twist, focusing on the impact that discriminatory adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have on LGBTQAI+ individuals’ resilience in adulthood.

This important research highlights how early experiences of discrimination can shape access to resources and resilience later in life, emphasizing the need for supportive outreach for LGBTQAI+ youth.

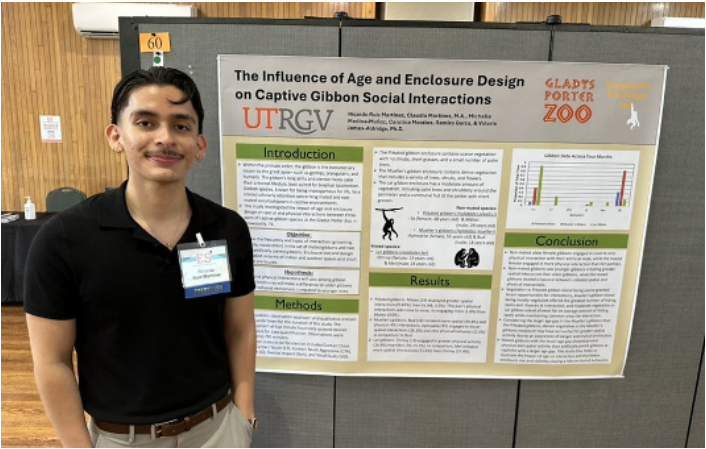
Sasha recently presented this work at both the Southwestern Psychological Association Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas, and the UTRGV Engaged Scholar Symposium.



Ricardo Ruiz Martinez

Poster Presentation:
Age-Related Differences in Physical and Spatial Interactions of Paired Gibbons in Captive Settings: The Role of Enclosure Design and Enrichment

This research studies physical and spatial interactions between three different pairs of gibbon species as influenced by their age, enclosure design, size, and enrichment availability. Pairs of pileated gibbons (*Hylobates pileatus*; Ila and Mateo) and Müller’s gibbons (*Hylobates muelleri*; Bud and Aphrodite), including mated Lar gibbons (*Hylobates lar*; Mel and Chrissy) stationed in captivity at the Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville, TX were focally observed on 5-minute intervals for a total of 785 minutes for four months. Descriptive statistics showed that the two pairs of artificially matched gibbons physically interacted less (5.0%) than the naturally paired gibbons did (41.6%). Despite this, the paired gibbons displayed a larger amount of spatial interaction (168%) than the mated gibbons (109.0%). Mateo (male) and Ila (female) of the pileated gibbon species displayed almost no physical interaction (0.0% and 1%, respectively) while Mateo engaged in more spatial interaction (5.65%) than Ila (3.5%). In Müller’s gibbons, Bud (male) initiated more physical and spatial interaction (4.0% and 99.8%, respectively) than Aphrodite (female), who displayed no physical interaction (0.0%) and minimal spatial interaction compared to her pair (26.3%). In contrast,



Chrissy (female) of the mated Lar gibbons showed higher levels of physical interaction than her partner (26.4% and 15.2%, respectively), but Mel (male) still showed greater amounts of spatial interaction (71.6%) than Chrissy (37.4%). Environmental and age-related factors as well as enrichment activities elucidate a considerable influence on captive gibbon behavioral patterns as concluded by this study. The findings underscore the crucial role of captive environments in behavioral studies, where varied enrichment protocols catered to a wide selection of species and ages serve both to promote animal psychological well-being and to strengthen research outcomes. Future research could construct an interconnected system of focal samples encompassing different enclosure designs and age variability between mated gibbon species.

Kaycee Maldonado, Jordan Kenemore, Sabrina Alaniz

Poster Presentation:
An Observation of Familial Obligations, Familial Support, and Stress Levels in Hispanic College Students

Our study sheds light on how family dynamics affect stress levels among Hispanic college students. We surveyed 461 students at a Hispanic-serving university to explore whether the pressure to support family—known as familial obligations—adds to students’ stress. Surprisingly, the study found the opposite: students who felt stronger family responsibilities actually reported lower stress levels, especially male students. While family support was linked to slightly lower stress for females, it didn’t significantly change the relationship between family obligations and stress overall. These findings challenge the idea that family



duties are a burden and instead suggest that strong family ties—whether through responsibility or support—may help buffer against stress. The study also highlights important gender differences and encourages future research to consider broader factors like socioeconomic status and age.



STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

UTRGV was recognized at the Texas Capitol in Austin on Thursday, April 3, 2025, as part of its 10th Anniversary celebration.

Students from across the university were specially invited to join university leadership for a day of recognition, celebration, and reflection on the impact UTRGV has made over the past decade.

Among those selected were **Political Science majors Ivan Martinez and Sofia Alanis**, who had an unforgettable experience attending the event. For Ivan, the trip marked not only his first visit to Austin, but also his first time flying solo in six years. “It really means a lot to me that I was considered to participate in such an important milestone for the university,” Ivan shared. “Everything was wonderful, and I’m very grateful for everything that happened today.”

Experiences like these reflected UTRGV’s commitment to providing students with meaningful, real-world opportunities that create lasting memories and strengthen their connection to the university community.



STUDENT SUCCESS

Department of Political Science
Political Science Association, New Officers

The Political Science Association (PSA), a student organization in the **Department of Political Science**, recently elected its 2025–2026 leadership. **Daniella Guerra**, a senior Political Science major, was elected President, with fellow senior **Sarah Saenz** selected as Vice President.

The organization is supported by faculty advisors **Dr. Dongkyu Kim**, **Dr. Michael Smith (Brownsville)**, and **Dr. Robert Velez (Edinburg)**.

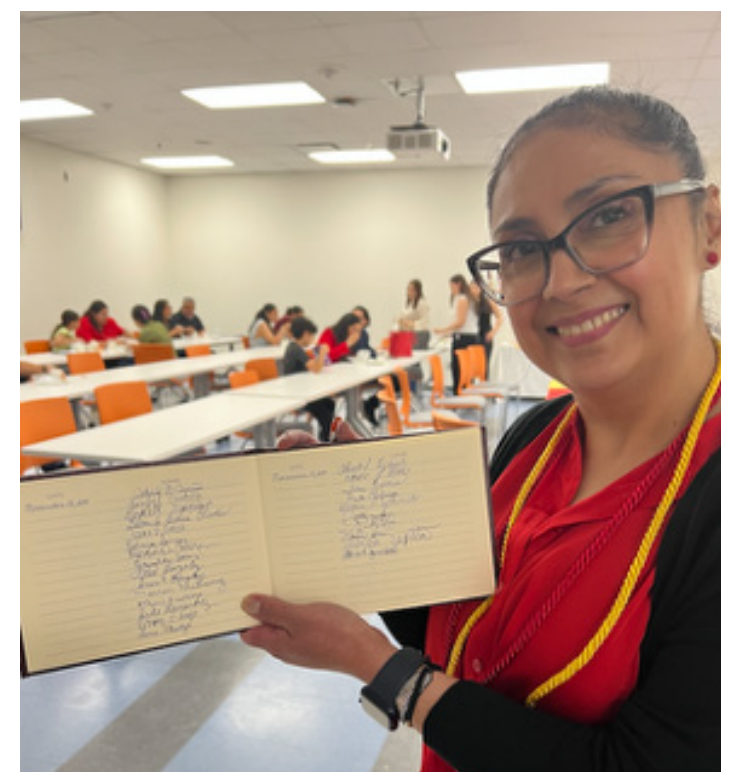


STUDENT SUCCESS

Department of Spanish

On May 2, 2025, the Department of Spanish celebrated its Spring 2025 undergraduate and graduate students—and welcomed its newest members into the Sigma Delta Pi Honor Society. The event honored 10 undergraduate and one graduate student for their academic achievements, and included the formal induction of Sigma Delta Pi honorees, led by faculty advisors **Ana Peña-Oliva** and **Dr. Laura Garza** (a member since 2000).

Graduates received their cords for Spanish and Sigma Delta Pi, marking a proud milestone shared with faculty, staff, family, and friends. The celebration continued with a dinner and dessert, wrapping a meaningful evening of recognition, tradition, and joy.





STUDENT SUCCESS

Department of Writing & Language Studies MA in English

Two outstanding graduate students from the English MA program have been honored as Teacher of the Year at their respective schools!

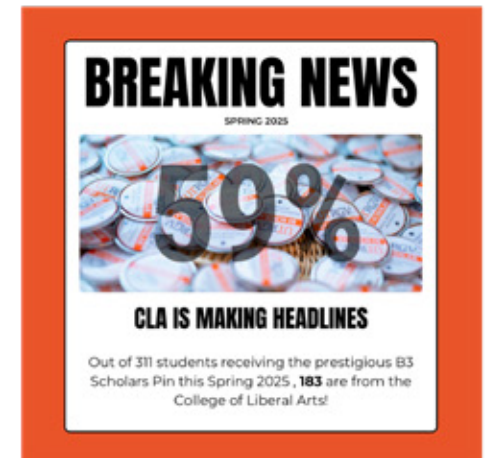
Ms. Victoria Bazan, from Mission Collegiate High School (Mission Consolidated Independent School District), earned her Master of Arts degree in English this Spring 2025 with a concentration in English Studies. Victoria is a proud two-time UTRGV graduate, having completed her Bachelor of Arts in English in Spring 2021. Her master's portfolio project, "Voices That Matter: Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy as a

Latina Educator in South Texas," was developed under the mentorship of **Dr. David Anshen (Department of Literatures & Cultural Studies)** and **Drs. Katherine Christoffersen and Randall Monty (Department of Writing & Language Studies)**.

Mr. Gilberto Capistran teaches at Port Isabel Early College High School (Point Isabel Independent School District). Raised in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, and Brownsville, Texas, Gilberto is currently pursuing his Master of Arts in English with a focus on Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies. In addition to his teaching and academic work, he is also a talented musician and songwriter for the City of Brownsville.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Congratulations to our B3 Scholars



STUDENT SUCCESS

School of Interdisciplinary Studies & Community Engagement

MA in Mexican American Studies

We're proud to celebrate the accomplishments of three MAS graduate students who have been admitted to a combined total of 13 PhD programs!

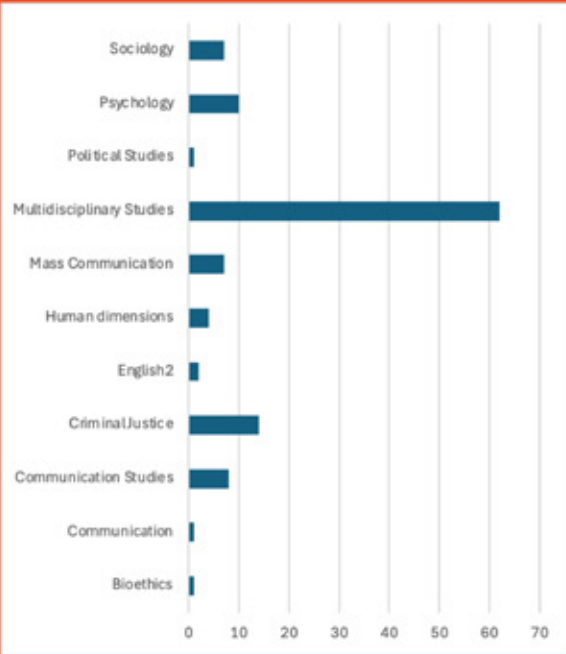
- **Taylor Seaver De La Fuente, Master's in Mexican American Studies**, will be attending the University of Michigan, pursuing a PhD in American Culture with a specialization in Latinx Studies.
- **Paulina Longoria, Master's in English and Graduate Certificate in Mexican American Studies**, will be attending Texas Christian University for a PhD in English, specializing in Latinx Literature.
- **Kimberly Grimaldo, Master's in Mexican American Studies**, will join Michigan State University as a PhD student in a dual major in Chicano/Latino Studies and English.



CLA's Outstanding

STUDENT Athletes

The College of Liberal Arts is proud to be home to 117 NCAA Division I student-athletes, competing in 14 sports and pursuing 11 different majors. Balancing the demands of academics, training, and competition requires grit, discipline, and strong support. Whether in the classroom or in the stands, CLA faculty and staff are there—teaching, mentoring, and cheering on our remarkable student-athletes every step of the way.



CLA WOMEN'S SPORTS

- Basketball - 3
- Golf - 2
- Track & Field / Cross Country - 15
- Soccer - 4
- Swimming & Diving - 6
- Tennis - 3
- Volleyball - 5

CLA MEN'S SPORTS

- Baseball - 23
- Basketball - 12
- Football - 20
- Golf - 3
- Track & Field / Cross Country - 10
- Soccer - 10
- Tennis - 1

STUDENT SUCCESS
BASEBALL
23 CLA Players

About two-thirds of the baseball team were College of Liberal Arts majors this past season, and the Vaqueros had a historic year.

They won the Southland Conference Championship, recorded a program-best RPI of 43, and climbed as high as 14th in 11.7 College Baseball's mid-major power rankings.

The team wrapped up the season with 36 wins—their highest total since 1991.



Armani Raygoza
Communication Studies

- Southland Conference Player of the Year
- Dick Howser Trophy semifinalist



Thomas Williams
Multidisciplinary Studies

- All-Southland Second Team
- All-Defensive Team



Steven Oliva
Multidisciplinary Studies

- Earned both of UTRGV's wins during bracket play in the Southland Conference Tournament
- All-Tournament Team

STUDENT SUCCESS
FOOTBALL
20 CLA Players

The football program completed its first full year of practice ahead of its inaugural game which will be played on August 30, 2025.



Eddie Lee Marburger
Multidisciplinary Studies

- Starting Quarterback

STUDENT SUCCESS
GOLF (Men's)
3 CLA Players

The UTRGV Men's Golf Team had a strong showing this past spring, winning the inaugural South Texas Match Play and finishing third at the Southland Conference Championships.



Arthit Kruaprayong
Sociology

- Second Team All-Southland Conference
- Five top-25 finishes this season

STUDENT SUCCESS
Tennis (Men's)
1 CLA Player

The UTRGV Men's Tennis Team delivered its best season since 2018, finishing 10-15 overall and an impressive 4-1 in Southland Conference play. The Vaqueros also went on an eight-match winning streak—their longest since 1987.

STUDENT SUCCESS
SOCCER (Women's)
4 CLA Players

In their first season competing in the Southland Conference, the UTRGV Women's Soccer Team made an immediate impact by qualifying for the conference tournament. The Vaqueros also defended their home turf with strength, posting a 6-2-2 record at the UTRGV Soccer and Track & Field Complex.

STUDENT SUCCESS
SWIMMING & DIVING (Women's)
6 CLA Players

The UTRGV Women's Swimming and Diving Team made waves in their inaugural NCAA Division I season, competing with a roster of 19 student-athletes. The team reached several historic milestones, including hosting their first-ever home meet in front of 631 fans, earning their first team victory, and making their debut at a conference meet.

STUDENT SUCCESS
Volleyball
5 CLA Players

The UTRGV Women's Volleyball Team had a standout season, earning its third postseason appearance by competing in the 2024 Women's National Invitational Volleyball Championship (NIVC). In their first year in the Southland Conference, the Vaqueros posted a strong 12-4 record and set a new program benchmark with five All-Conference honorees—the most of any team in the league.



Isabella Costantini
Multidisciplinary Studies

- Southland Conference (SLC) Setter of the Year
- SLC Newcomer of the Year
- All-Conference First Team
- Five-Time SLC Setter of the Week -
- Set a new program record with 11.34 assists per set in a single season

STUDENT SUCCESS
TENNIS (Women's)
3 CLA Players

The UTRGV Women's Tennis Team wrapped up a successful season with a 9-8 overall record and a solid 6-3 mark in Southland Conference play. Their late-season momentum included a four-match winning streak, helping them secure the No. 5 seed in the conference tournament and capping off a competitive year on the court.

STUDENT SUCCESS
BASKETBALL (Women's)
3 CLA Players

The UTRGV Women's Basketball Team delivered a remarkable turnaround in the 2024–25 season, improving from just six wins in 2022–23 to finishing 16-16 overall. They posted an 11-9 record in Southland Conference play—the program's best conference performance to date. Along the way, the team set several new records, including most consecutive conference wins (5), longest win streak in six years (5), and their first back-to-back road victories since the 2018–19 season.



STUDENT SUCCESS
BASKETBALL (Men's)
12 CLA Players

The UTRGV Men's Basketball Team posted its first winning season since 2018, notching a 10-win improvement over the previous year. The Vaqueros brought energy and efficiency to the court, leading the Southland Conference in scoring, three-pointers made, and assists



Howie Fleming Jr.
Multidisciplinary Studies

- 16th in conference scoring
- 20 double-digit scoring games
- Five double-doubles



DK Thorn
Sociology

- 14th in conference scoring
- 21 double-digit scoring games



Cliff Davis
Human Dimensions of Organizations

- Set program record with 14 three-pointers in a game
- Scored a career-high 42 points



Trey Miller
Multidisciplinary Studies

- 3rd in the Southland Conference with 133 assists



Kwo Agwa
Human Dimensions of Organizations

- College Sports Communicators (CSC) Academic All-District honors

STUDENT SUCCESS
Track & Field / Cross Country
Women: 15 CLA Athletes •
Men: 10 CLA Athletes

CROSS COUNTRY

The UTRGV Cross Country program made significant strides this past season, with the Women's team capturing the title at the OLLU Classic—their first team win in at least 20 years. Both the Men's and Women's teams also posted their best Southland Conference finishes in four seasons, with the Women placing 6th and the Men finishing 9th.

INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

In their first season competing in the Southland Conference, the UTRGV Indoor Track & Field teams delivered standout performances, with the Women finishing 3rd and the Men placing 6th—both marking their best conference finishes to date. The Vaqueros set 12 new indoor program records, including seven by the Women's team and five by the Men's. At the SLC Indoor Championships, UTRGV athletes earned seven individual medals and two relay medals.

OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

The UTRGV Outdoor Track & Field team had a record-setting season, with eight student-athletes qualifying for the NCAA West First Round—the most in program history. The Women's team delivered a strong performance at the Southland Conference Outdoor Championships, finishing 3rd, their best result since 2021. Throughout the season, the Vaqueros broke nine program records—six by the Women's team and three by the Men's.

GoUTRGV.com



Nayla Harris
Criminal Justice

- SLC Indoor & Outdoor Champion
- NCAA West qualifier, UTRGV
- Female Breakout Athlete of the Year
- Three-time SLC Track Athlete of the Week



Achol Maywin
Multidisciplinary Studies

- NCAA West qualifier
- Outdoor All-Conference Second Team (High Jump)



Efe Latham
Sociology

- NCAA West qualifier
- Outdoor All-Conference Second Team (Shot Put)



Lilliana Guerrero
English

- Outdoor All-Conference Second Team (800m)
- Indoor All-Conference Third Team (800m)



Jizzale Davis
Psychology

- Outdoor All-Conference Second Team (200m)
- Indoor All-Conference Third Team (200m)
- SLC Indoor bronze (4x400m relay)



Trinity Kirk
Communication Studies

- SLC Outdoor bronze (4x400m relay)



Jamari Harts
Multidisciplinary Studies

- SLC Indoor Champion (400m)
- Outdoor bronze (4x400m relay)



Jaylen Critton
Multidisciplinary Studies

- Indoor All-Conference Third Team (60m hurdles)



Alejandro Arellano
Derrius Henry
Cerrone Thompson
Multidisciplinary Studies

- SLC Indoor & Outdoor bronze (4x400m relay)





DAY OF
Giving
UTRGV



THE FUTURE OF TEXAS
THE FUTURE OF TEXAS
THE FUTURE OF TEXAS

One Day To Transform The Future of Texas!

For 10 years, UTRGV's growth and success have been powered by the dedication and hard work of our faculty and staff. Now, your support is needed more than ever.

Join us for UTRGV Day of Giving on **August 26th, 2025** as we raise money for the resources and opportunities that help our UTRGV community succeed!

Your donation provides:

- Scholarships to make education accessible
- Program innovation
- Research that impacts our community

Faculty & Staff Exclusive:

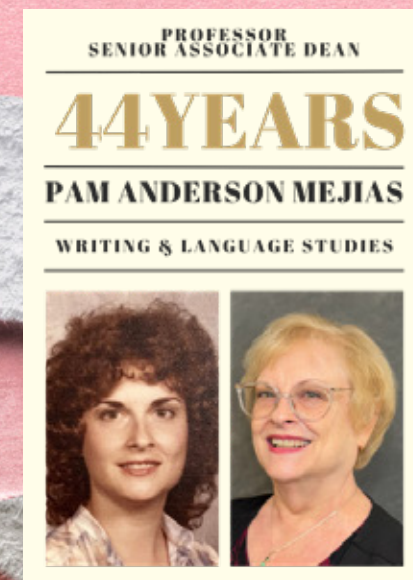
Show your Vaquero pride with an exclusive UTRGV bag when you donate \$75 or more! Donate now by scanning the QR code below.

Let's grow **The Future of Texas**, together.

UTRGV.LINK/FY25DAYOFGIVING-I



With a combined 421 years of service to UTRGV and its legacy institutions—UT Brownsville and UT Pan American—we celebrate this remarkable group of 19 scholar-educators as they begin their next chapter. ¡Salud and thank you! Best wishes on the adventure ahead.

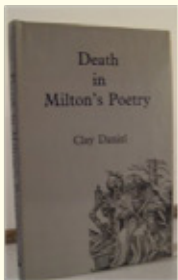


ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

34YEARS

CLAY DANIEL

LITERATURE & CULTURAL STUDIES




SENIOR LECTURER

30YEARS

AMY FRAZIER

WRITING & LANGUAGE STUDIES



LECTURER II

23YEARS

ROSALVA LONGORIA

PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

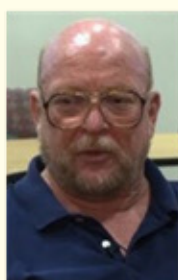


ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

19YEARS

THOMAS WHITE

CRIMINAL JUSTICE




PROFESSOR

18YEARS

AZIZA ZEMRANI

SIPCE




PROFESSOR

18YEARS

IRVING LEVISON

HISTORY




ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

22YEARS

STEPHEN LEACH

PHILOSOPHY




PROFESSOR

22YEARS

MATTHEW CHRISTIANSEN

LITERATURE & CULTURAL STUDIES




SENIOR LECTURER

21YEARS

JOHN MILFORD

SIPCE



PROFESSOR
ASSOCIATE DEAN

16YEARS

RUSSELL SKOWRONEK

ANTHROPOLOGY



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
ASSOCIATE DEAN

15YEARS

SHEILA DOOLEY

WRITING & LANGUAGE STUDIES




PROFESSOR

19YEARS

TERENCE GARRETT

POLITICAL SCIENCE




ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

19YEARS

DAVID FISHER

HISTORY




PROFESSOR

19YEARS

AMY HAY

HISTORY



PROFESSOR

16YEARS

MARIA GUERRERO

SPANISH

SENIOR LECTURER

10YEARS

DIANNA BLANKENSHIP

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

LECTURER III

7YEARS

ANTHONY DE SANTIS

PHILOSOPHY



STAFF APPRECIATION
College of Liberal Arts

As part of our Administrative Appreciation Day, our college staff enjoyed a fun afternoon at the baseball field and witnessed a great win from the Vaquero baseball team! **Dean José Dávila-Montes** had the honor of throwing the ceremonial first pitch to kick off the game.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
College of Liberal Arts

In April, the Spring Grad Fair 2025 brought an outstanding turnout — with more than double the number of attendees compared to last year! It was a fantastic opportunity to connect with prospective graduate students and showcase the exciting opportunities available at UTRGV.

The College of Liberal Arts continues to shine with its 18 Master's Degree programs and 1 PhD in Clinical Psychology, attracting passionate students eager to advance their education and careers.



We want to know.

Send in your “did you know” accomplishments,
publications, kudos, grants, student successes,
and other bragging points - big and small -
to be included in our CLA college newsletter.



Use the below QR Code to access our submission form.



<https://tinyurl.com/4ukp3m3v>