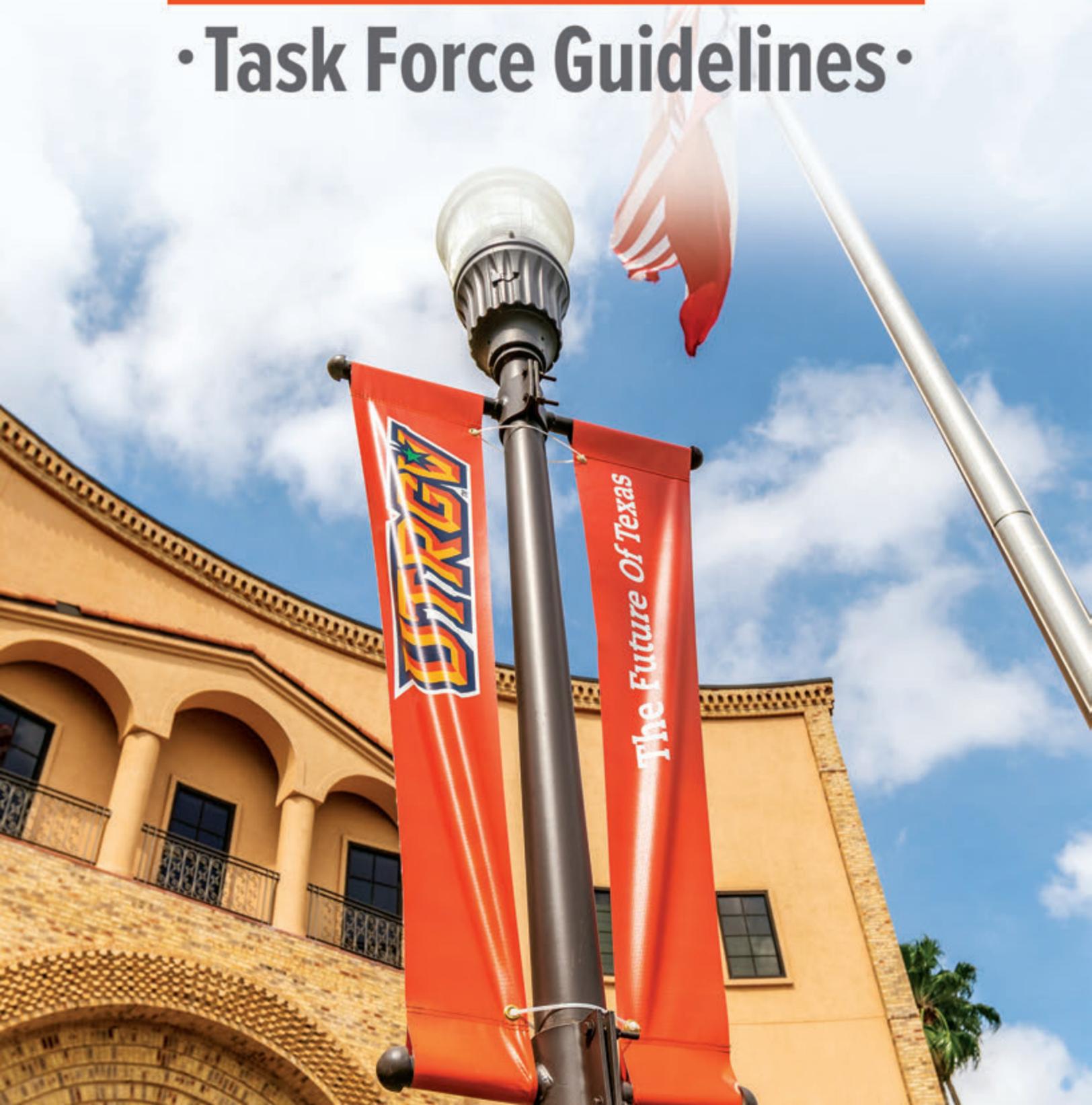


Return to Campus

• Task Force Guidelines •



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

June 8, 2020

In May 2020 the President appointed a Return to Campus Task Force to provide recommendations and procedures for bringing university operations back to campus in a safe and practical manner. The Task Force consisted of 26 individuals representing all stakeholder groups and divisions across UTRGV, and included faculty, staff, a student, and administration. In addition, the Task Force appointed and engaged seven workgroups, to examine Athletics, Campus Auxiliary Services and Student Life, Campus Events, Lecture and Classroom Activities, Instructional Laboratories, Research Laboratories, and Off-Campus and Clinical Activities. These groups involved an additional 80 individuals in the development of specific, actionable recommendations across the spectrum of campus operations.

This Executive Summary will detail at a high level the major recommendations of the Task Force and its workgroups. Additional actionable detail and specific information is outlined in the full report document, entitled “Return to Campus – Consolidated Report of the Task Force”. Further program-specific detail and guidance is offered in each of the individual workgroup reports, which are also available for review and utilization.

The Task Force and all workgroups recognize that the situation with COVID-19 is highly fluid, and it is possible that modifications may need to be made during the academic year in order to continue functioning in alternate formats. All groups, therefore, support the development of contingency plans in the case of all instructional activities and operations needing to return fully online.

Summary of the Task Force’s Guidance:

Health and Safety Recommendations

- It is critical the campus community follows good public health practices:
 - Maintain a physical distance of 6 feet.
 - Wash hands frequently.
 - Stay home if sick or having respiratory symptoms.
 - Clean and disinfect one’s personal environment.

- The use of face coverings is required on campus when:
 - In all campus buildings, classrooms, libraries and laboratories.
 - Face coverings are not required when:
 - In one’s personal office space, as long as 6-foot distance can be maintained.
 - Outdoors, as long as 6-foot distancing can be maintained.

Campus Events

- In order to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 on campus, specific policies must be followed in the scheduling of all campus events.
- Indoor and outdoor in-person events on all UTRGV campuses continue to be cancelled throughout the month of September. The Event Task Force will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and provide updates when available.

For more information, email universityevents@utrgv.edu.

Campus Auxiliary Services and Student Life

- Campus Auxiliary Services will begin a phased approach to reopening on June 1, 2020.
- Preventive measures will be required to reduce likelihood of spread of disease, including:
 - Required use of face coverings.
 - Use of floor signs/markers to practice social distancing.
 - Use of plexiglass dividers.
 - Reduction of occupancy to 25% capacity.
 - Single-occupancy rooms in on-campus housing.
 - Use of remote technology where appropriate and feasible.
 - Access by appointment to services and facilities, such as University Recreation, on-campus move-in, or Student Union meeting rooms.

Libraries

- Campus libraries will reopen on June 1, 2020, with specific usage instructions, including:
 - Required use of face coverings and social distancing.
 - Books and physical items will not circulate at this time.
 - Computers will be available with appropriate social distancing.
 - Printing will be permitted, but only personnel will retrieve the printouts.
 - Available staff can answer questions, but more specific requests should be made and scheduled virtually.

Athletics

- The Department of Athletics staff will return to campus on an alternating schedule beginning June 8, 2020.
 - Staff must have no symptoms of COVID-19 or contact with COVID-19 positive individuals for 14 days prior to arrival of student-athletes.
 - Staff will have frequent wellness checks by athletic training staff.
- Domestic student-athletes will return to campus beginning July 15, 2020, after self-isolating for 7 days prior to arrival. International student-athletes will return to campus beginning July 1, 2020, and will self-isolate for 14 days on arrival to campus.
 - Clearance for return will be based on review of travel history.
 - Students-athletes will be required to have negative COVID-19 testing results prior to being cleared for participation in athletic activities.
- Athletics has developed specific housing and training policies that are detailed in the consolidated report.

Instructional Laboratories

- Instructional labs will open for face-to-face educational activities with the fall 2020 semester.
- All laboratory spaces will be surveyed for their capacity, recognizing the requirement for appropriate social distancing.
 - The size of laboratory classes will be determined based on these capacity assessments.
- Instructional labs where student objectives can be achieved without face-to-face contact should be conducted online.
- Instructional laboratories with hands-on requirements will be offered in a hybrid or reduced-seat-team approach, which will rotate users into the space to conduct in-person experiences, yet maintain social distancing for each section.
 - Rotation of students into labs will reduce the number of students in educational spaces and promote safe distancing.
 - The maximum size of student working groups, defined as activities with learners in close working proximity, will be four (4) students.
 - Multiple student working groups are allowed depending on size of lab and appropriate distancing.
- All participants in activities in the instructional laboratory activities will follow routine campus safety and social distancing policies, which include enhanced precautions such as the use of masks and gloves, and being screened for symptoms prior to entry using the UT Health RGV screening questionnaire.

Lecture Courses and Sections

- Lecture courses and sections will open for face-to-face educational activities with the fall 2020 semester.
- All lecture courses with more than 50 students will be delivered online.
- College deans will work with UTRGV Facilities to determine the safe capacity of each classroom or space.
- Face-to-face instruction will occur using hybrid or reduced-seat-time formats, with compliance to rules of physical distancing.
 - Under no circumstances will classes meet with more than 50 students.
- All synchronous class interactions will be recorded and available on Blackboard.
- Training will be made available for all faculty in optimal online instructional methodologies.

Off-Campus Activities (Clinical, Teaching, Internships)

- Off-campus activities will resume July 1, 2020 and will continue to expand at the beginning of the fall 2020 semester.
- Individuals participating in off-campus activities will arrive in the Rio Grande Valley at least 14 days prior to beginning the activity.
- Individuals will self-screen daily using the UT Health RGV screening questionnaire.
- Individuals will follow all requirements of the off-campus facility for social distancing, hygiene, and use of face coverings.
- All learners participating in clinical activities must have a negative COVID-19 test result within one week of beginning the activity.
- All clinical learners will have specific education around the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and best clinical practices to mitigate exposure to and spread of COVID-19.

Research Laboratories

- Laboratory directors (LD) and principal investigators (PI) are responsible for all research conducted within laboratories under their supervision.
- All laboratory users must follow UT Health RGV and safety protocols, which may be expanded to the use of face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) as indicated.
- Research activities should be scheduled to comply with physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Research laboratories will maintain sign-in and sign-out sheets to be used on entry to and exit from the lab.
- Additional health and safety requirements may be required in research laboratories, as directed by research administration and environmental health and safety.

Testing Centers, Incubators, and Business and Agricultural Centers

- All users will participate in these activities by appointment only.
- All users will complete the UT Health RGV screening questionnaire prior to arriving on site.
- All services will be offered with appropriate social distancing and at safe numbers based on capacity of the specific space.
- Cleaning of spaces will be completed daily and between each group of participants.

Travel Guidelines

- Current guidelines restrict all non-essential business travel for UTRGV employees.
- Travel outside the State of Texas and the border cities in Mexico is strongly discouraged.
- On return from travel outside these areas, all members of the campus community must complete a required screening form.
 - Individuals may be asked to self-isolate based upon their travel history.
- Travel guidance will be updated as conditions warrant.

Screening for Illness

- Screening will be conducted when indicated using the current version of the UT Health RGV screening questionnaire.
- Any individual exposed to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
 - Students who become symptomatic should be tested at UTRGV Student Health
 - Employees who become symptomatic should be tested at UT Health RGV.
- Any individual testing positive must self-isolate and will not be permitted to return to in-person activities until:
 - 10 days have passed since their first positive test.
 - They are symptom-free for 3 days without fever.
 - They have 2 negative COVID-19 tests, 24 hours apart.
 - Being cleared for return by UT Health RGV personnel.
- Contact tracing of all positive individuals will be conducted by UT Health RGV personnel.

COMBINED GUIDANCE

June 8, 2020

In May 2020 President Guy Bailey appointed a Return to Campus Task Force to provide recommendations and procedures for bringing university operations back to campus in a safe and practical manner. The Task Force consisted of 26 individuals representing all stakeholder groups and divisions across UTRGV, and included faculty, staff, a student, and administration. In addition, the Task Force appointed and engaged seven workgroups, to examine Athletics, Campus Auxiliary Services and Student Life, Campus Events, Lecture and Classroom Activities, Instructional Laboratories, Research Laboratories, and Off-Campus and Clinical Activities. These groups involved an additional 80 individuals in the development of specific, actionable recommendations across the spectrum of campus operations.

The Task Force and all workgroups recognize that the situation with COVID-19 is highly fluid, and it is possible that modifications may need to be made during the academic year in order to continue functioning in alternate formats. All groups, therefore, support the development of contingency plans in the case of all instructional activities and operations needing to return fully online.

The following reflects the consensus of the Task Force:

Protecting Yourself and Others from COVID-19 (coronavirus)

What are some effective ways to prevent the spread of the COVID-19?

The following are effective practices for preventing the spread of COVID-19:

- Frequent hand-washing.
- Coughing into the bend of your elbow.
- Physical distancing (staying at least 6 feet away from others).
- Staying home, especially if you are sick.

How can I prevent getting the COVID-19?

Visit the COVID-19 Prevention and Treatment page to learn about how to protect yourself from respiratory illnesses, like COVID-19. For now, the best defense is to follow some of the same steps you would take to prevent getting other viruses, such as the common cold or the flu.

- Clean your hands often
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.

- o If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- o Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact
 - o Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - o Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
- Clean and disinfect
 - o Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
 - o If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle
 - o Get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet, drink plenty of liquids and exercise if you are able. These steps will strengthen your immune system and enable you to fight off infections easier.

The CDC website has additional FAQs on the topics of Travel, Pregnant Women and COVID-19, and COVID-19 and animals.

Use of Face Coverings/Masks

University-Wide Policy

UTRGV has implemented a new face covering protocol, which requires the wearing of face coverings when entering a campus building to protect others and themselves to create the safest possible campus.

New required protocols, which apply to everyone on campus, including but not limited to all students, staff, faculty, contractors, vendors, suppliers and visitors, are as follows:

- Anyone entering a campus building must wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose.

- o The covering must be worn in all hallways, public spaces, research labs, teaching/computer labs, libraries, classrooms, automobiles with a passenger, stairwells, elevators and common areas, as well as office spaces. In office spaces, when social distancing of 6 feet is possible and maintained, face coverings may be removed.
 - o Face coverings also are required in outdoor settings, if safe social distancing and gathering practices are not possible.
- Individuals may supply their own face covering. If a face covering is not available, a washable/reusable covering will be provided.
 - Face coverings protect others around you and prevent you from unintentionally spreading the COVID-19 virus to others.
 - All individuals on campus are expected to practice robust personal hygiene, including frequent hand-washing and sanitation of shared surfaces.
 - Failure to comply with these procedures may result in disciplinary action through the appropriate processes.

UTRGV will modify these mask/face covering rules as circumstances direct and with guidance from the campus community and leadership

Campus Events

- In order to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 on campus, specific policies must be followed in the scheduling of all campus events.
- Indoor and outdoor in-person events on all UTRGV campuses continue to be cancelled throughout the month of September. The Event Task Force will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and provide updates when available.

For more information, email universityevents@utrgv.edu.

Campus Auxiliary Services and Student Life

- Campus Auxiliary Services will begin a phased approach to reopening on June 1, 2020.
- Preventive measures will be required to reduce likelihood of spread of disease, including:
 - o Required use of face coverings.
 - o Use of floor signs/markers to practice social distancing.
 - o Use of plexiglass dividers.
 - o Reduction of occupancy to 25% capacity.
 - o Single-occupancy rooms in on-campus housing.
 - o Use of remote technology where appropriate and feasible.

- o Access by appointment to services and facilities, such as University Recreation, on-campus move-in, or Student Union meeting rooms.

Virtual services and activities will continue to be available throughout the summer. Modifications may be implemented as conditions permit.

The following Campus Operations will be open on June 1st unless otherwise noted:

Campus Stores & Vaquero Tech Center

Summer Hours of operation: Monday – Friday (10:00 am – 2:00 pm)

Website: <https://www.bkstr.com/utrgvstore>

Food Services

Food service will be available in Edinburg and Brownsville during the summer.

- Chick-Fil-A will re-open on June 4th in the Student Union in Edinburg
 - o Summer Hours of service will be Monday – Thursday (11:00 am – 2:00 pm)
 - o Contactless service available by ordering on GrubHub mobile app
- Marketplace food kiosk will be available at MAIN in Brownsville on June 1st and is available 24/7. Food offerings include a variety of sandwiches, fruit or yogurt cups, fruit, protein bars, beverages, snacks.

Website: <https://utrgvdining.sodexomyway.com/dining-near-me/resident-dining-hall>

Housing and Residence Life

Student housing is available for on campus apartments for students who do not have a suitable housing alternative. Students will be assigned single-occupancy rooms. Visit our website for additional COVID-19-related changes. Starting on June 1, residents can apply for on campus housing and continue residing on campus with certain safety restrictions in place.

Virtual Hours of Operation (By Appointment Only): Monday – Friday (8 am – 5 pm)

Website: www.utrgv.edu/home

Student Union

Summer Hours of Operation will be Monday – Thursday (10:00 am – 2:00 pm). Appointments required to access meeting rooms.

Email: StudentUnion@UTRGV.edu

University Recreation (UREC Edinburg)

Summer Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday (10:00 am – 5:00 pm)

Appointment required to access the facility. Use of fully covered gloves and face coverings/masks required.

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/urec/>

V One Card

ID Card Office is available remotely during the summer months. Contactless service is provided using our V OneCard GET portal. Individuals can submit a request for an official University issued identification card (known as V OneCard) using the Online ID Request Process. The GET portal allows students to upload photo ID; an ID card will be printed remotely and mailed to a home address. Visit our website for step-by-step instructions on how to request your V OneCard.

Website: <https://utrgv.edu/vonecard>

Libraries

The University Libraries located on the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses will reopen to the UTRGV community on June 1 to coincide with the start of the Summer I session. Hours of operation will be 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, and closed weekends.

- Our reopening will be a gradual process that respects current CDC guidelines for social distancing and slowing the spread of COVID-19. Face masks/coverings will be required to enter and use all library spaces. Plexiglass is currently being installed at the library service desks in Edinburg and Brownsville.
- Books and physical items will not circulate at this time. Faculty members, instructors, and graduate assistants with specific research needs or requiring materials for course reserves should contact circulation@utrgv.edu
- Computer stations will be available at appropriate distances from other users. Printing will be available, but printers will be located in non-public areas. Printouts will be retrieved by library staff (eliminating clusters of students touching a common public printer) and can be picked up at a library service desk.
- Available staff can answer directional and basic research questions. Questions requiring extra attention or expertise will be routed to a librarian by phone/Zoom/Skype for a virtual consultation.

For further information, please visit our website at www.utrgv.edu/library or contact Library Administration at library.admin@utrgv.edu

Athletics

Phase 1 - Return to Campus

- Athletic Department staff will return to campus on an alternating schedule beginning on June 8.
 - Staff will be back on campus one-month prior to the arrival of student-athletes (SA) and should be symptom free and have had no known contact with COVID-19 for 14 days prior to student-athlete arrival.
 - Staff will be monitored with frequent wellness checks by the athletic training staff.

- Domestic Student-Athletes will be allowed to return to campus beginning July 15 if they are symptom free and have no known contact with COVID-19 14 days prior to returning to campus. International SAs will begin to return to campus on July 1 and will be self-isolated for 14 days on arrival. The following outlines protocols and procedures for the return of UTRGV SAs.
 - Student-Athletes will be asked to self-isolate for 7 days prior to arrival on campus.
 - All international SAs will self-isolate for 14 days after their arrival on campus
 - A travel questionnaire will be sent to SAs prior to their arrival.
 - The questionnaire will align with the UTRGV's self-reporting travel form and will be used in place of the University's form. Information will be shared with UT Health RGV officials.
- **No student-athlete can return to campus without following testing protocol.**

Testing upon arrival

- Testing procedures will include:
 - Domestic SAs will self-isolate for 72 hours prior to COVID-19 testing
 - SAs will be tested 10 days after the start of self-isolation (3 days on campus) at UTRGV Edinburg Student Health.
 - International SAs will be tested after 14 days of self-isolation on arrival
 - SAs must continue isolate in apartment (on or off-campus) until negative test result is confirmed. SAs will not have access to any athletic facilities until cleared to return.
 - SAs who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for until cleared by UT Health RGV.
 - Six apartments have been set aside (6 people total-one per apartment) for those who must be isolated due to positive tests.

Housing Policies

- Student-Athletes arriving to campus housing will check-in by contactless check-in.
 - Teams are considered "family units" and should not closely interact with other teams.
- SAs should remain in their apartment as much as possible and should not visit other apartments.
- No visitors are allowed during the summer/early arrival period prior to classes resuming.
- Cleaning restrooms and shared spaces in the apartments regularly is required.
- Adhere to occupancy limits for laundry rooms and other common spaces.
- Off-campus SAs should practice social distancing.
- Educational sessions will be provided to all SAs prior to the arrival to campus. Department and UTRGV officials will share best practices and protocol expectations.

UTRGV Dining Hall

- Provide meals available for takeout back to apartment/dorm.
- Provide meals to those in self-isolation or quarantine through delivery to doorstep.

Training/Education/PPE

- Masks and individual water bottles will be issued upon arrival to campus.
- Education will be provided for all coaches and staff prior to student-athletes arriving to campus.
- Education sessions will be provided for each team on mitigating risks of contracting COVID-19
- SAs must report any symptoms immediately to the athletic training room.
- SAs should report any travel outside of Valley to training room/campus authorities as required by campus policy.

Opening the Victory Center, Training Facilities, Weight Room and Practice Venues

- The Department of Athletics has developed comprehensive plans for SA returning to practice activities and sites.
- A full description of these plans can be requested from the Department of Athletics and is found on the Return to Campus webpage.

PHASE II – Return to Practice (to be reassessed by July 1, 2020)

- For SAs to participate in organized team practices, future guidelines and protocols will be followed.
- Phase II assumes that practice without the use of social distancing is allowed.
- Weight Room and Athletic Training Room facilities will adapt to new protocols provided.
- Locker room access will only be provided if organized practices are allowed.

Open Locker Rooms

- Locker rooms will open for access at 50% occupancy. This can change as additional protocols are provided.
- Locker rooms will be sanitized after or between each practice session with a fogger or disinfectant spray using approved disinfectant.
- Use of common spaces (locker rooms/showers) should be limited to 50% of roster.
- Personnel will split the team into groups and schedule the use of the locker room.
- Time spent in the locker room by the student-athletes should be minimal.
- Team meetings and film sessions should only be held with enough distancing in a large space.
- Personnel will limit and schedule entrance points to locker room, hallways and training room.
- Hand sanitizer will be placed at the entrance of each locker room.
- Limit contact with common touch points when possible by leaving doors open, removing trash can covers before team arrives.
- Identify high use touch points in locker rooms and disinfect area at a higher rate (door handles, sinks, shower handles, toilets, urinals).

- Only use of personal drinking bottles by student-athletes and coaches will be permitted.
- Laundry should be washed daily with appropriate detergent with team managers using proper protection (gloves, face masks, etc.). Student-athletes should deposit their used practice laundry in hampers to minimize team managers' contact with dirty laundry.

PHASE III – Return to Competitions and Team Travel (will be reassessed by July 1 to include guidelines for practice and access to athletic facilities.)

- Bus travel will occur unless it is necessary to fly.
- The Director of Athletics will continuously review and approve all travel in coordination with UT Health RGV to ensure our student-athletes, coaches and staff are traveling to locations that are not experiencing heightened COVID-19 activity.
- Travel party will be limited to coaches, staff and student-athletes.
- Wellness checks will be performed at the Athletic Training room on the day of travel
- Wellness checks will be performed daily by coaches and staff while team is traveling
- Wellness checks will be performed when the travel party returns to UTRGV. Wellness checks when returning to UTRGV will be performed by an athletic trainer.
- SAs, coaches and staff should wear face coverings while traveling
- SAs, coaches and staff will be provided hand sanitizer and should use frequently while traveling.

PHASE IV – Fans are allowed at Athletic Events at UTRGV (will be reassessed by August 15)

Instructional Laboratories

Lab Capacities and Working Groups/Clusters

- UTRGV Facilities Management will provide the capacities for all instructional labs following social distancing guidelines
- For labs that are at 40% capacity or less, a representative from the offering School or College will meet with Facilities to do a walk-through and decide whether furniture can be moved to accommodate increased student capacity. Schools and Colleges will identify rooms for storage of necessary furniture.
- Total number of students in a laboratory will be determined based on 6-foot social distancing guidelines
 - o The size of working groups within the lab, i.e. clusters of students working together in close proximity (such as around a microscope), will be limited to no more than four (4) students. In smaller labs where social distancing requirements cannot be followed, the capacity may be limited to fewer students.
- Screening for symptoms using the UT Health RGV questionnaire will be required prior to entering the instructional lab.

Schedule

- Instructional Labs will open for face-to-face educational activities with the fall semester, 2020
- Instructional Labs with no hands-on requirements, i.e. where student learning objectives can be met via remote delivery methods like video recordings, simulations, or other means, should be offered fully online.
- Instructional Labs with hands-on requirements, where student learning objectives cannot be met remotely, will be offered in a hybrid or reduced seat format. A “flipped classroom” model will be used, with didactics, sharing of information and data analysis will be done remotely, while hands-on laboratory activities will be done face-to-face.
- The hybrid/reduced seat model will allow the rotation of student groups into alternating weeks, without the need to break the lab into multiple sections.. Furthermore, the hybrid approach will reduce the number of students on campus at a certain lab time and allows the lab to shift to fully online delivery if necessary. It will also provide an option for face-to-face testing and help sessions as needed.
- Faculty will need to incorporate ADA requirements and accessibility for students with disabilities into whatever model is implemented.
- Instructors of hybrid labs should develop a contingency plan and be ready to delivery labs in an online mode with short notice if issues related to COVID-19 require modification
- Where possible, instructors should complete face-to-face lab time by the Thanksgiving holiday, so that the data analysis, team learning, and reporting can be done remotely after then.

Laboratory Health & Safety Measures

- Masks and gloves will be required inside all instructional labs. All laboratory users will wash their hands prior to entering the lab. Students and faculty will receive instruction in use of these materials.
- Laboratory supervisors will be responsible for enforcement of health and safety requirements.
- Screening for symptoms using the UT Health RGV Screening Questionnaire will be required prior to entering the instructional lab.
- Enhanced Sanitization will be conducted by custodial services. Individual departments are responsible for local disinfection. Disinfectant & hand sanitizer will be provided by EHSRM.
- EHSRM and Facilities will be responsible for installation of signage in buildings and labs.

Lecture Courses and Sections

- Lecture courses and sections will open for face-to-face educational activities with the fall semester, 2020
- All lecture courses with more than 50 students will be delivered online.
 - In cases in which faculty prefer the use of face-to-face instruction in selected courses for pedagogical reasons, faculty may utilize a hybrid format through a reduced-seat-time approach.
 - Reduced-seat-time courses will be taught primarily through remote delivery modes; however, faculty are assigned a classroom and meeting time to allow for synchronous and/or face-to-face interactions. This will maximize flexibility to respond to changing conditions.
 - Under no circumstances will face-to-face instruction exceed 50 students in any one time or space, even when adequate social distancing can be maintained.
Classes with over 50 students that require a face-to-face or synchronous component to meet student learning objectives may utilize hybrid or reduced-seat-time formats, assuming that the above conditions can be met.
- Any synchronous class interactions with students, be they face-to-face or remote, shall be recorded and made available to them via blackboard.
- All other lecture courses not currently classified as online or reduced-seat-time will be converted to reduced-seat-time format.
 - These lecture courses may be preferentially converted to online format with the approval of the chair or dean
- All faculty will have their lecture courses prepared for fully-online delivery if necessary due to changing campus requirements.
- Large-scale online training opportunities for faculty will continue throughout the summer. These opportunities will include a range of options from 8-hour training through blueprinting as coordinated through COLTT.
- UTRGV leadership will assess the current state of technology for faculty and students and explore methods to support its expansion.
- Deans and chairs will ascertain the need for classroom spaces by consulting with faculty to determine which courses and sections require a face-to-face component.
- Facilities will provide deans with an analysis of the dimensions and square footage of every UTRGV classroom, lab and studio to estimate the capacity for social distancing.

- Final decisions as to modes of delivery and section scheduling shall be made at the department level, within institutionally established parameters and with approval from the College's/School's dean.

Off-Campus Activities (Clinical, Teaching, Internships)

Participation in Off-Campus Activities

Off-Campus Activities will resume beginning July 1, 2020 and will continue to expand at the beginning of the fall semester, 2020

Individuals participating in UTRGV off-campus education activities will:

- Arrive in the Rio Grande Valley, if traveling from a location outside of the RGV, at least two weeks prior to their first day of face-to-face activities to allow at a minimum for a 14-day self-isolation period.
- Self-screen daily for symptoms associated with COVID 19 by using the UT Health RGV Screening Questionnaire or as required by the facility.
- Follow facility guidelines for screening at the time of each entry
- Wear a face covering when entering a facility as required by facility
- Wash their hands immediately upon entering the facility and prior to departure

Best Practices for Community Education Sites

- Education sites and community partners should have a master plan in place to resume activities with UTRGV students which includes:
 - Safety protocols and processes for staff, UTRGV students, and all other UTRGV representatives participating in education programs
 - Use of face coverings and other personal hygiene and safety procedures at the off-campus site
 - Access to sanitation stations and availability of cleaning supplies within spaces
 - Educational design which will prevent students from interacting with presumptive COVID 19 individuals
 - Identification of sanitary location(s) for students, faculty, and/or staff to store personal items and food.

Individuals Participating in Direct Patient Care Activities

In addition to the above requirements, those learners participating in direct patient care activities at clinical sites will:

- Be tested for COVID-19 and receive a negative result within one week prior to the first day

of on-site clinical activity. Any individual with a positive test will not be allowed to join clinical activities until they are symptom-free, test negative twice in diagnostic tests taken at least 24 hours apart, and are cleared by UT Health RGV personnel, either in-person or through a telehealth visit.

- Sanitize any devices or equipment brought into a clinical education facility on a daily basis.
- Participate in educational/safety training prior to participation in clinical education activities.
 - Up-to-date COVID 19 information
 - Safety protocols and procedures (i.e proper hygiene, social distancing basics, etc.)
 - Use of respiratory protection and other PPE
 - Donning and doffing of PPE, especially in the context of their current and potential duties
- Require masks of all faculty, staff, and students during appointments

Best Practices for UTRGV Clinical Education Sites

- UTRGV clinical education sites should modify physical spaces and revise protocols to ensure safety of all individuals participating in learning activities at UTRGV student-facing and/or client-facing clinical spaces. Modifications should include:
 - Installation of physical barriers to limit student/client contact (i.e. sneeze guards)
 - Reconfiguration of patient/client spaces to allow for appropriate social distancing
 - Screening of clients prior to entering the clinical space
 - Requirement of clients to wear face masks inside of the clinical space
 - Limitation of number of clients in the clinical space at one time
 - Implementation of appropriate social distancing in waiting rooms or spaces
 - Provision of supplies such as tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels
 - Requirement for faculty, staff, and students to hand wash and/or hand sanitize regularly
 - Disinfection of client areas between appointments
 - Provision of PPE to faculty, staff, and students when appropriate
- UTRGV clinical education sites will also conduct educational/safety training for faculty, staff, and students participating in clinical activities, including:
 - Up-to-date COVID19 information
 - Safety protocols and procedures (i.e proper hygiene, social distancing basics, etc.)
 - Use of respiratory protection and other PPE
 - Who needs to use protective clothing and equipment, and in which situations specific types of PPE are needed
 - How to put on, use/wear, and take PPE off correctly, especially in the context of their current and potential duties

Research Laboratories

Access to Laboratories

- Laboratory Directors (LD) and supervising Principal Investigators (PI) are responsible for research projects conducted in the laboratories under their supervision. Signage with the name and current contact information of the supervising PI or LD must be posted outside the door to such facilities. Signage must include any access restrictions.
- For laboratories shared by multiple PIs, the PIs must immediately select a Contact PI for the shared space and post the name and contact information for the Contact PI at the entrance to the shared space.
- When selecting individuals who will be given access to the laboratories, LDs or PIs should prioritize students needing to conduct research to finish a degree.
- LDs and PIs must minimize the number of individuals using specific pieces of equipment, and minimize the number of research team members in the lab at any one time.

General Guidelines

- Laboratory personnel must don personal protective equipment (PPE), to include face mask at a minimum, upon entry to the lab. Cloth masks are not intended for use in laboratory or clinical settings that require droplet or respiratory protection. Cloth masks are adequate for research settings that did not require any type of respiratory protection prior to the pandemic.
- Research activities for laboratory staff and students should be scheduled to ensure appropriate physical distancing by at least 6 feet as recommended by CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>). Physical distancing should be observed in the laboratory at all times. The maximum occupancy of the lab should be guided by this requirement.
- All research laboratories must have a sign-in and sign-out sheet easily accessible at the entrance to the laboratory. All persons entering or leaving the lab must legibly write their name, contact phone number, and the date and time of entry and exit. These records will be kept in the lab and made available to EHS&RM personnel as needed.
- Frequent cleaning and sanitation of high touch lab work areas and surfaces consistent with CDC guidelines (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html) is required. Surfaces should be cleaned using EPA listed disinfectants from “List N” effective against SARS-CoV-2 virus (see <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sarscov-2>). Colleges, Schools, Centers, and Facilities may provide additional guidance that is stricter in nature.
- Where helpful, markings should be placed on the floor to assist laboratory personnel in recognizing appropriate distances.

- Use of shared equipment or shared spaces should be coordinated through use of posted sign-up sheets or other mechanisms to ensure that physical distancing can be observed.
- When possible, laboratory meetings involving more than five participants should be conducted remotely. Physical distancing must be observed during small group meetings.
- Random inspections will be conducted to monitor compliance with PPE, distancing, and other safety guidelines. Deviations from guidelines will be reported to departmental Chairs and Deans.
- PIs and LDs should develop contingency plans and be ready to delivery labs in an online mode with short notice if issues related to COVID-19 require modification.
- University personnel from Environmental Health Safety & Risk Management (EHS&RM) will be available to assist in securing masks, personal protecting equipment, and cleaning solutions as needed.

Human Subjects Research with an In-Person Component

For research involving Human Subjects with an in-person component please refer to the policies available at <https://www.utrgv.edu/irb/>

Lab Expenditures Related to COVID-19

Lab expenditures related to COVID-19 emergency (e.g., PPE that was not required prior to the pandemic, sanitation and cleaning supplies required to meet guidelines) must be coordinated with the following individuals:

- Academic Affairs: Claudia Dole
- Health Affairs (other than SOM): Eduardo Gutierrez
- School of Medicine: Cynthia Farris
- Research, Graduate Studies and NPD: Rosalinda Salazar

Testing Centers, Incubators, and Business and Agricultural Centers

Staff Safety and Protocols

- Examinees, members and clients will complete the UT Health RGV Screening Questionnaire prior to arrival
- Examinees, members and clients are placed six feet apart during check in and testing and while receiving services
- Testing lab and incubator capacity has been reduced to maintain social distancing
- Facial coverings are required for staff and examinees and can only be removed for identification purposes. Fifty face masks have been provided to each testing center, incubator and center to be used if an examinee arrives without a required facial covering.
- Staff wear disposable gloves throughout the day
- Staff clean and disinfect computers, desktops, mice, check in area, pens, pencils, chairs, lockers, and door handles after each examination

- Testing centers, incubators and centers are vacuumed, swept, mopped, disinfected every other day by their staff
- Director, Testing Coordinator, Accountant, Administrative Assistant's Individual offices are disinfected daily
- The offices of the incubators, Business Centers and Agricultural Center will be disinfected daily.
- All personnel are six feet apart from each other while monitoring examinees or working in incubators or business and agricultural centers

Testing Center Registration and Check-In

- Registration- All exam registrations are done online via the Testing Center website utilizing the Epay system or through national testing companies. On site registration is not available.
- Testing Day Check-In
 - Examinees must complete the UT Health RGV Screening Questionnaire
 - Check in at front desk window with valid ID
 - Testing candidates follow standard review of center rules, secure personal belongings in a locker, and are admitted to assigned testing lab
 - Testing candidates are seated and begin computer-based exam while monitored by Testing Specialist(s)
 - Upon completion of the exam, testing candidates will be escorted out of testing area, recover personal items, and check out of facility
- Testing Center Procedures
 - Painters tape will be used to mark the floors/sidewalks, keeping the examinees six feet apart
 - Examinees must wear masks at all time, except when verifying identification
 - Examinees will be provided a disposable numbered Ziplock bag for their personal belongings and will be kept by testing administrators
 - Examinees will be escorted to assigned testing room, while maintaining social distance
 - Hand sanitizer will be available at check-in and in each classroom for examinees (pending availability)
 - Examinees will be assigned a seat six feet apart from each other
 - Test Administrators will wear mask, gloves, and follow all rules and protocols of testing and social distancing
 - Test Administrators will monitor throughout testing session and collect all materials at exam end
 - Examinees will pick up their personal belongings by presenting their assigned Ziplock bag number, throw bag in trash, and leave the premises
 - Test Administrators will wipe down desks and surfaces with disinfectant wipes
 - A work order will be submitted for rooms to be cleaned by facilities staff before and after testing.

Incubators, Business Centers and Agricultural Center Registration

- Registration- All appointments for members use of the incubators or counseling sessions at the Centers are to be scheduled online or by phone. Walk-In's will not be allowed.
- Check-In Upon Arrival
 - Upon arrival, members of the incubators will be asked to use a ringer system or call the number posted to gain access to the incubator.
 - Members and scheduled clients must complete the UT Health RGV Screening Questionnaire prior to or at the time of arrival.
- Procedures at Incubators, Business Centers and Agricultural Center
 - Physical distancing measures will be in place throughout the incubators and centers to maintain at least six feet of separation between visitors and staff.
 - Signage with safety guidelines and recommended use of furniture, equipment and appliances will be placed throughout the incubators and centers.
 - Staff and visitors must wear masks at all times with the exception of when they are working alone in an office
 - Hand sanitizer will be available at check-in and throughout the incubators and centers (pending availability)
 - Staff will wipe down desks, tables, and equipment used with disinfectant wipes after each counseling session or upon incubator members' departure.
 - All self-serve coffee/water service will be suspended. Visitors will be allowed to bring in their own beverages but upon departure, must take with them any glasses, water bottles or mugs.

Travel Guidelines

International Travel

- UTRGV continues to restrict business travel internationally.

Domestic Travel

- All state agencies are required to cancel all non-essential business travel. If travel is already booked, it may remain booked until seven (7) days prior to the expected date.
- Domestic business travel outside of the state of Texas continues to be suspended.

Travel Protocol

- With the domestic and global spread of COVID-19, UTRGV continues to strongly discourage all personal domestic and international travel. All University employees and students returning from travel from outside of Texas and the Mexico border cities of the Rio Grande Valley are required to report their travel to the University. Please complete this form to let us know about your recent travel or your upcoming travel plans.

- After completion of the form, your supervisor will contact you informing you if you are approved to return to work after travel. If not approved to immediately return to work, it is likely that you will be instructed to self-isolate for 14 days, which may require you to take sick leave or leave without pay. Please note that the form may be submitted ahead time, before your scheduled trip.
- For students returning or matriculating to campus from outside of Texas, you may also be instructed to self-isolate for 14 days. You should arrive early enough to the region to self-isolate for 14 days prior to onset of in person classes or work.
- Special note for those members of the University community residing or needing frequent travel in the Mexico border cities abutting the Rio Grande Valley Counties: It is not required that you fill out a travel form for each occurrence, but rather to inform your supervisor of your situation requiring regular travel and obtain individual approval. For questions about your individual circumstances, please contact HR.
- For any questions regarding University related travel please contact Travel Services Office at travel@utrgv.edu, 665-2161, 665-2612, 882-3822.
- Our main concern continues to be the health, safety, and security of our UTRGV community. We appreciate your patience and cooperation while we work through this unprecedented situation.

Screening for Illness

Screening Questions

- The current version of the UT Health RGV Screening Questionnaire will be used to assess all individuals visiting campus, as well as on a recurring basis for members of the campus community as determined by their location, activity, and risk category.

Self-Isolation

- Faculty, staff, or students who have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is demonstrating symptoms of the virus should self-isolate for a period of 14 days. Faculty, staff, or students who become symptomatic during the quarantine period should be tested for the virus.

Procedures for Individuals Symptomatic for COVID-19

- Faculty, staff, and students who are having any respiratory symptoms should not report to work. Individuals who have symptoms on campus must immediately be separated from other members of the campus community. Employees should be advised to report to UTRGV Employee Health and students should be advised to report to UTRGV Student Health.

- Faculty, staff, or students who have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is demonstrating symptoms of the virus should self-quarantine for a period of 14 days. Faculty, staff, or students who become symptomatic during the quarantine period should be tested for the virus. They would be allowed to return to campus activities based on the current UT Health RGV guidelines.

Return to Activities After COVID 19 Exposure or Infection

Suspected or Laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 with Symptoms

- An individual with a positive test and symptoms will not be allowed to return to in-person activities until they:
 - o Are symptom-free for 3 days (72 hours) since recovery (no fever without use of fever-reducing medications) and improvement in respiratory symptoms;
 - o Test negative twice in tests taken at least 24 hours apart; and,
 - o Are cleared by UTRGV Health personnel.
- Contact tracing will be conducted by UT Health RGV personnel to identify all persons who may have been exposed to the individual testing positive and to require appropriate testing for COVID-19.

Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 without Symptoms

- An asymptomatic individual with a positive test will not be allowed to return to in-person activities until:
 - o 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and they continue to have no symptoms;
 - o Test negative twice in tests taken at least 24 hours apart; and,
 - o Are cleared by UTRGV Health personnel.

Return to Campus Task Force Members

• *Campus Wide Steering Committee*

- o John H. Krouse, Chair
- o Rick Anderson
- o Doug Arney
- o Letty Benavides
- o Steven Block
- o Griselda Castilla
- o Jonikka Charlton
- o Chasse Conque
- o Walter Diaz
- o Michael Dobbs
- o Peter-James Ehimika
- o Veronica Gonzales
- o Sofia Hernandez
- o Michael James
- o Victoria Lozano
- o Karen Martirosyan
- o Jennifer McGehee-Valdez
- o Dara Newton
- o Ala Qubbaj
- o Cynthia Paccacerqua
- o Volker Quetschke
- o Veronica Ramirez
- o Reymundo Ramos
- o Dalyn Ruiz
- o Marta Salinas-Hovar
- o Rebekah Sepulveda

• *Athletics*

- o Molly Castner, Chair
- o Nate Burk, Sr.
- o Alfred Castillo
- o John Evans
- o Jimmy Gonzales
- o Todd Lowery
- o Sergio Martinez
- o Lucas Monroe
- o Vince Volpe

• *Classrooms and Lectures*

- o Walter Diaz, Chair
- o Mark Anderson
- o Steven Block
- o Griselda Castilla
- o Nikita Chavarria
- o Michael Dobbs
- o John Gonzalez
- o Vivian Incera
- o Michael Lehker
- o MaryJane Lewitt
- o Lance Nail
- o Cynthia Paccacerqua
- o Ala Qubbaj
- o Volker Quetschke
- o Sharon Radzysinski
- o Reymundo Ramos
- o Alma Rodriguez
- o Gerardo Rodriguez
- o Shawn Saladin

• *Instructional Laboratories*

- o Ala Qubbaj, Chair
- o Steven Block
- o Griselda Castilla
- o Richard Costello
- o Walter Diaz
- o Javier Garcia
- o Seyma Keskin
- o MaryJane Lewitt
- o Saraswathy Nair
- o Leticia Ocanas
- o Volker Quetschke
- o Marta Salinas-Hovar
- o Constantine Tarawneh
- o Leonel Vela

• *Off-Campus Experiences*

- o Reymundo Ramos, Chair
- o Frank Ambriz
- o Lori Berry
- o Jose Campo Maldonado
- o Brandon Cantazaro
- o Criselda Garcia
- o John Gonzalez
- o Margaret Graham
- o Jack Kaufold
- o MaryJane Lewitt
- o Suzanne Maniss
- o Zelma Mata
- o Linda Matthews
- o Fidencio Mercato
- o Nancy Nadeau
- o Ruth Ragland
- o Agustin Rodriguez
- o Paul Sale
- o Richard Sanchez

• *Research Laboratories*

- o Karen Martirosyan, Chair
- o John Blangero
- o Subhash Chauhan
- o Glorimar Colon
- o Karen Lozano
- o Jay Morrow
- o Volker Quetschke
- o Cordelia Rasa
- o Laura Seligman
- o Paul Sharpe
- o Christopher Vitek
- o Sarah Williams-Blangero

• *Campus Auxiliary and Student Life*

- o Letty Benavides, Co-Chair
- o Griselda Castilla, Co-Chair
- o Dara Newton, Co-Chair
- o Michelle Alvarado
- o Doug Arney
- o Jose Campo Maldonado
- o Roberto Cantu
- o Jonikka Charlton
- o Carlos Chavez
- o Richard Costello
- o Michael Dobbs
- o Elisa Flores
- o Rebecca Gadson
- o Abraham Hernandez
- o Maggie Hinojosa
- o Mike James
- o Leslie Jones
- o Krystal Marroquin
- o Sergio Martinez
- o Elias Ozuna
- o Kimberly Rottet
- o Marta Salinas-Hovar
- o Martha Sanchez
- o Cynthia Valdez
- o Andrea Yen
- o Edna Zambrano-Martinez



The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley