

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES UPDATE

Monday, April 13, 2020



Just as we were preparing our strategic initiatives newsletter for distribution last month, we were forced to shift our focus to addressing the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and ensuring the well-being of our entire university community. Nevertheless, thanks to the extraordinary commitment of our faculty and staff, we have much positive news to share.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Town Halls: On October 28 and 29, 2019, members of the UTRGV community came together on the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses to review and discuss goals, objectives, and metrics that have been developed for the university's Core Priorities and Other Areas of Focus as detailed in the strategic plan. You can see the report on the town halls, including the transcribed feedback forms we received, on the [Strategic Plan website](#).

Action Plans: On January 17, the Strategic Plan Review Committee (SPRC) met to take stock of what we've accomplished so far and set out the path to transition from planning to reporting and assessment. In the coming weeks the members of the SPRC will be assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the goals and objectives outlined in the strategic plan. We will post that information on the Strategic Plan website when it's ready. In the meantime, we're preparing templates for reporting, with an eye to the production and release of the second Comprehensive Report in early December.

Strategic Initiatives Grants: As previously reported, we received 36 proposals in response to our call for projects related to the strategic plan. After a rigorous and challenging process of review, we selected six projects for funding, totaling \$103,000. We are currently assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the projects, as some involve in-person contact that is no longer possible. Our hope is that all of the projects will be on track starting in the fall, with progress reports coming in December. More information about the funded projects is available on the [Strategic Plan website](#).



SACSCOC

In November 2019, we received a very positive report from the SACSCOC offsite committee on the SACSCOC Compliance Certification Report submitted in September 2019. In the next phase of the reaffirmation process, a SACSCOC onsite team visited UTRGV March 2-5, 2020, and met with various groups of faculty, staff, students, and administrators in both Brownsville and Edinburg to learn more about our facilities, programs, and services. They visited off-campus teaching sites in Weslaco and Harlingen, and provided feedback on our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). At the conclusion of the visit, the committee's report reflected the best possible outcome of no findings. The onsite committee will submit its report to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, which will vote on our reaffirmation at the December 2020 SACSCOC Annual Meeting.

For more information, contact Christine.Shupala@utrgv.edu.



CAMPUS CLIMATE

In Fall 2019, UTRGV departments submitted progress reports on their action plans and commitments to continue their successes and improve areas of opportunity. All scorecards, action plans, and first progress reports are now available via the [UTRGV Campus Climate Survey Website](#). Campus climate liaisons are currently in the process of gathering the second progress reports, and campus climate initiatives and highlights will be shared with our campus community soon.

Thank you for your diligent work towards your identified goals and continued support.

For more information, contact Nicole.Englitsch@utrgv.edu.



CAMPUS CONNECT

The Campus Connect Committee (C3) met November 20, 2019 in Brownsville. The meeting focused on identifying strengths and attributes each UTRGV campus possesses and how those strengths and attributes could be used to enhance the identity of each campus.

Presentations were conducted by Janna Arney, Patricia McHatton, Walter Diaz, Jennifer McGehee and Nicole Englitsch, who shared information about progress that's been made and plans for moving forward, updates about the academic program technical review and information on course completion, enrollment and commuter information reports, and the [Employee Resources webpage](#).

The next Campus Connect Committee meeting will be scheduled as soon as conditions permit. Any comments should be sent to the C3 committee at Nikkie.Hodgson@utrgv.edu or Mark.Kaswan@utrgv.edu.



STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT PLANNING

The initial Strategic Enrollment Planning process is complete. The first phase, situational analysis development, was completed in April 2019, followed by completion of the strategy and action plan phase over the summer. The Strategic Enrollment Planning Council completed the prioritization and identification of the action plans, final phase, during summer and fall 2019. A draft version of the plan is complete and the final version is scheduled for completion later this summer. As we transition from planning to management of the plan, we will re-engage the Strategic Enrollment Planning Council to provide oversight, assessment, and refreshment of the strategies.

For more information, contact co-chairs Maggie Hinojosa at Maggie.Hinojosa@utrgv.edu or Janna Arney at Janna.Arney@utrgv.edu.



NEW PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Since its formation, the Office of New Program Development has reviewed over 50 new program proposals, and encouraged the development of 20 new programs. These programs, which include undergraduate, masters, professional doctorates, and PhD programs, are now in various stages of development. The office provides full support for the development of new program proposals for internal and external reviews and prepares all necessary documents for the submission of proposals to the UT System and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Ideas for new programs can be submitted using the [New Program Idea Proposal Form](#) by any UTRGV student, staff, or faculty.

For more information, contact Parwinder.Grewal@utrgv.edu.



WEBSITE

University Marketing and Communications and Information Technology continue to work together to enhance UTRGV's website presence. The enhancements include a newly designed homepage with intelligent and customized technology focused on recruitment efforts and prospective undergraduate and graduate students. The new webpage is scheduled to launch in August.

The teams also are working to redesign templates for all other UTRGV internal webpages. The final designs are being finalized and will be presented to the campus community for implementation following the full launch of the new homepage.

For more information contact Perla.Pequeno@utrgv.edu or Josse.Garrido@utrgv.edu.



QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

We are pleased to announce that UTRGV has selected and received approval for its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) as part of its SACSCOC reaffirmation process. As with our Strategic Plan and our Strategic Enrollment Plan, student success is at the heart of our QEP.

Based on a variety of campus-wide efforts, academic advising has been selected as our top priority in supporting student success, especially advising that is specifically targeted to unique student characteristics. This differentiated advising approach is being called "Aquí Para Ti | Here For You"! As part of our Strategic Enrollment Planning efforts, UTRGV has committed to hiring 32 new academic advisors to reduce case loads of advisors to the national average of 300.

The SACSCOC visiting team provided recommendations for enhancing the overall plan which we will be addressing over the next few weeks. We will be attending college and unit meetings to share more about our QEP. Please let us know if you're interested in learning more about the QEP and the positive impact we believe this will have on our students.

For more information, please contact Jonikka Charlton at Jonikka.Charlton@utrgv.edu.



STUDENT SUCCESS REORGANIZATION

Student Success continues to be our number one priority. Recently, the Student Success Division was moved to report directly to the President. The goal is a coordinated and integrated approach to student success to support our students throughout their educational journey at UTRGV. The Office of Student Success (formerly Student Academic Success), led by Jonikka Charlton, will be directly overseen by Deputy President Janna Arney. Student Life, led by Becky Gadson, and Student Educational Outreach, led by Cindy Valdez, will be overseen by VP for Strategic Enrollment and Student Affairs (formerly VP for Strategic Enrollment), Maggie Hinojosa.

We have kicked off our efforts with a workshop to identify short-term support strategies that will have immediate impact on our upcoming fall 2020 class and our currently enrolled students. These ideas will be formalized and vetted by the Student Success Steering Council and implemented alongside our QEP: Differentiated Advising.

For more information, please contact the Office of the President at President@utrgv.edu.