

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES UPDATE

Thursday, March 4, 2021



STRATEGIC PLAN

Next cycle of strategic planning: We are now mid-way through the third year of our five-year strategic plan, and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee has started taking steps for the development of the next five-year plan, which is scheduled to launch at the start of the Fall 2022 semester. This should give us enough time to ensure we have plenty of opportunities to gain input from the UTRGV community, which played such a big role in the development of the current plan. Members of the various committees involved in implementing the current plan met in July 2020 to reflect on the planning and implementation process and the lessons learned so we can do even better for the next cycle. For the next strategic plan, we are discussing bringing a consulting group on board to provide guidance and assistance in developing the plan. We expect to begin moving forward in the Spring semester. For more information about strategic planning, contact strategic-planning@utrgv.edu.

Strategic Initiatives Grants: In 2019, the Academic Affairs Division provided \$100,000 in total funds to [six projects](#) that advance or reflect the values of the UTRGV Transforming Our World Strategic Plan. Due to the global pandemic, the timeline for these projects was pushed back to allow the various groups to restructure their projects as needed. In early November 2020, all of the funded project groups came together with the Strategic Plan Steering Committee in a mid-term convening to share the

progress and challenges they have faced. From this, we saw that the pandemic had varying effects on these projects. Some projects that planned in-person interviews had already completed the in-person stage or were successfully able to transition to remote methods of interviewing, so they are pretty much on track. A project to provide an opportunity for students in entry-level English classes to showcase their work will be transformed from an in-person to an on-line event. A project that involved live dance is progressing as safely as possible but may be extended as a result. Planning is now underway for an on-line symposium on April 29 to showcase the projects. For more information on these funded projects, visit the [Funded Projects website](#).

Comprehensive Report: We are currently working to put together a comprehensive report on the progress UTRGV made toward meeting the goals we set out in the Transforming Our World Strategic Plan. It's no surprise the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact in a number of areas. By the same token, the first half of 2020 was pre-COVID, so in our analysis we are considering the progress we made before the pandemic hit. This approach will allow us to get a clear sense of the pandemic's effects, so we can adjust our expectations for the remaining years of the plan. The Comprehensive Report should be ready to distribute in the Spring semester. For more information about the Comprehensive Report, contact strategic-planning@utrgv.edu.



STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT PLANNING

Of the thirteen strategies prioritized by the Strategic Enrollment Plan Council, two were considered top priorities and provided funding.

Differentiated Advising Model – 30 academic advisors were hired from December 2019 to October 2020 to reduce the student-to-advisor ratio from 550:1 to 300:1. In addition, a differentiated advising approach has been implemented to address the needs of different student subgroups.

Undergraduate Financial Services – The UTRGV Scholars program was redesigned to allow for a tiered approach in awarding UTRGV Scholars (Presidential, Meritorious, Distinguished) in FY 21 and the funding model has increased by 200 students for FY 22.

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



CAMPUS CONNECT

The Campus Connect Committee (C3) did not meet as planned during Spring 2020 due to COVID-19. However, the Campus Connect Steering Committee continues to meet on a regular basis. The meetings have 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.

The full committee will be meeting on March 11 to discuss the unique opportunities provided by COVID-19 regarding remote meetings and learning, and their impact on the C3 goal of campus equity.

The C3 Steering Committee has proposed to the President's Office the establishment of an ad-hoc campus council to provide

contextual information regarding the local impact of campus-specific and university-wide decisions. The ad hoc council will serve as context experts to provide relevant, campus-specific information to university decision-makers who will ensure fair and equitable treatment across campuses. Members will be those serving on the C3 at-large committee from each campus. They will act in both an advisory manner regarding issues brought forth by the administration, as well as in an advocacy manner to bring local concerns to the attention of administration.

Any comments should be sent to the C3 Chair, Nikkie.Hodgson@utrgv.edu.



CAMPUS CLIMATE

UTRGV's Strategic Plan includes a focus on promoting a welcoming and inclusive campus climate, along with values around engagement, shared governance, leadership, inclusion, and well-being. In 2018, we conducted an institution-wide Climate Survey, and we want to thank everyone for their feedback and diligent work in creating action plans and making progress towards their identified goals to strengthen our campus climate.

We are committed to continually assessing our campus climate and are therefore conducting a climate survey for 2021. Once again, we are partnering with ModernThink to survey all students and fulltime faculty and staff. Your feedback and active participation in this survey are not only appreciated; they are essential to our success. We look forward to sharing the results with the campus community as soon as they are available, toward the end of the Spring 2021 semester.

For more information on the ongoing survey and results, action plans, and progress reports from the 2018 survey, visit utrgv.edu/campusclimate.