

Executive Summary

Aquí Para Ti: Differentiated Advising for Retention and Timely Progress Towards Degree Completion focuses on the development and implementation of a new approach to academic advising targeting the needs of first-year students at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). The plan includes one institutional goal and two student success goals, each with its own set of outcomes and measures. The institutional goal centers on the use of a data-informed approach to advising first year students, enabling advisors to be more strategic and proactive in their work. The first student success goal focuses on improving first year students' timely progress to degree completion, including 1) credit accumulation, 2) degree applicability of coursework taken, and 3) fall to spring persistence and first year retention. The second student success goal aims to address first year students' perceptions, attitudes and behaviors related to their academic advising interactions, including 1) perceptions of and satisfaction with advising/advisor quality, 2) self-confidence with and ability to engage in academic planning, and 3) commitment to earning a degree and taking ownership of their education.

The *Aquí Para Ti* initiative arose from comprehensive institutional strategic planning and assessment processes, which in turn supported The University of Texas System strategic initiatives. *Aquí Para Ti* also takes advantage of institutional capacity and expertise developed in concert with external partners such as Excelência in Education, Frontier Set, and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).

A significant percentage of students enter UTRGV having earned thirty or more hours of credit through dual enrollment programs at the high school level or through a community college. However, many other students enter with no, or few, prior college hours. *Aquí Para Ti* focuses on providing advising services that meet students where they are, providing targeted advising curricula designed to help each student develop a sense of belonging, understand academic and career pathways, implement strategies for academic success, identify a program of study, and set a course that will allow them to complete their degree in a timely manner. A key component in the provision of these services is the development of successful collaborations among advisors, program faculty, college administrations, and other departments across the university that support student success. *Aquí Para Ti* incorporates opportunities for the development of collaborative relationships within its structure, through the college-level Advising Strategy Teams and a university-level Student Success Steering Committee.

UTRGV has allocated significant resources to support the successful implementation of the *Aquí Para Ti* initiative, including financial, human, and physical resources. A comprehensive assessment plan will provide essential data to allow the university to identify trends, improve the initiative based on data analysis, and determine impact of the initiative on first-year student retention and success. Assessment includes both quantitative and qualitative measures, as well as direct and indirect measures.