

## SPORTS



UTRGV Women's Volleyball Head Coach Todd Lowery nets 500th win against California Baptist University.

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## ESPAÑOL



Los estudiantes que se gradúan están decepcionados y contentos con los cambios de sede en las ceremonias de graduación.

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UTRGV's Auxiliary Business Services is working with Sodexo to reduce plastic waste on campus.

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### Vaquero Voice:

"I would like to see more courses on programming because when I was in high school, I had already decided I was going to pursue computer science and, so, a major part of it is programming."

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# ON THE BALLOT



THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

Cameron County Elections Administrator Remi Garza hands out unofficial results to members of the news media during last year's general election. On Tuesday, voters will cast ballots on 10 proposed state constitutional amendments and elect candidates for city commissions and councils in some Rio Grande Valley municipalities.

## Constitutional amendment and local cities election

**Brigitte Ortiz**  
THE RIDER

Texas voters will cast ballots Tuesday on 10 proposed state constitutional amendments and elect local officials in some municipalities.

UTRGV political science Associate Professor Mark Kaswan said that if the amendments pass, they will then be written into the constitution and the state will follow guidelines as to what it can or cannot do.

"The Texas Constitution is a

bit different from the federal Constitution," Kaswan said. "The federal Constitution is very vague. It doesn't have a lot of detail. The Texas Constitution, on the other hand, is incredibly detailed. It's one of the longest constitutions in the United States, essentially the second-largest."

The propositions on the ballot are as follows:

**Proposition 1**--"The constitutional amendment permitting a person to hold more than one office as a municipal judge at the same

time."

An explanation of the proposed amendment in the League of Women Voters of Texas Voters Guide (Vote411.org) states: "A municipal judge oversees pre-trial hearings, small claims proceedings, and misdemeanor cases in a city or town. Proposition 1 would allow municipal judges to hold more than one paid public office at the same time, meaning they could simultaneously preside over multiple municipalities, regardless of whether they

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## Students react to graduation changes

**Maleny Ortega**  
THE RIDER

Graduating students are disappointed--and happy--with the venue changes in UTRGV's December commencement.

Maria Fernanda Vila, a graduating rehabilitation services senior, was disappointed about the change of venue from the Jacob Brown Auditorium to the Harlingen Convention Center for December's commencement ceremony.

"It is because my family is from Mexico so we have to take more time to cross the bridge and go to Harlingen," Vila said. "We have to take our time and I think it would be more useful to us in the Jacob Brown."

Vila said she would like to have the graduation ceremony in the auditorium because it is closer to the university.

"Some people told me that Harlingen is a little bit more beautiful and spacious, so I hope it will be," she said.

The Fall 2019 commencement ceremonies will now be held at the Harlingen Convention Center and the Bert Ogden Arena in Edinburg, according to university officials.

The ceremonies at the Harlingen Convention Center will take place at various times Dec. 13, and in the Bert Ogden Arena Dec. 14. Brownsville graduating students will attend the ceremonies in Harlingen and Edinburg graduating students will

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# Degree Works update

## Feature now shows credits not applicable

**Victor G. Ramirez**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Nearly 800 UTRGV students received an email Oct. 24 regarding technical or vocational classes not counting toward their degree requirements, but according to a university official, it will not affect them on their graduation path.

"Students who received the letter regarding the technical credit will have contact information on there, specific to their situation," said University Registrar Sofia Montes. "So, I would advise them to look carefully at the letter and contact the office that's identified there for them."

Montes clarified that the change is referenced specifically to Degree Works.

"There is, and has been for years, an academic policy already that indicates students can't use any technical or

vocational credits towards degree requirements at UTRGV," she said.

According to the UTRGV website, Degree Works is an online degree evaluation tool that allows students to track class progress toward graduation.

"What Degree Works has the capability of doing now, is to specifically list where those technical credits fall," Montes said. "So, it kind of separates them so it makes it easier for students to see their technical credits and see how many total hours they have in technical credit that won't count towards their degree."

Lorena Martinez, a social work freshman, said UTRGV should accept technical and vocational courses when students transfer their credits.

"I mean, they should accept them because some people, like, they come with all those credits that they wasted

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Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER

Accounting sophomore Alfredo Garza (from left) and criminal justice senior Cristian Campos sign in with civil engineering freshman Luis Elizondo Thursday at U Central on the Brownsville campus. Nearly 800 UTRGV students received an email Oct. 24 regarding technical or vocational classes not counting toward their degree requirements, but according to a university official, it will not affect them with their graduation path.



# THE RIDER

The Rider is the official, award-winning student newspaper of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The newspaper is widely distributed on and off campus in Brownsville and Edinburg, Texas. Views presented are those of the writers and do not reflect those of the newspaper or university.

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MORE THAN A  
NEWSPAPER



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Today Vaquero Ice Cream Bar**

Free ice cream with various toppings to choose from will be served starting at 12:15 p.m. in the Student Union Commons on the Edinburg campus. For more information, email studentunion@utrgv.edu or call 665-7989.

**Eco Rio**

The **Environmental Studies Symposium** will host presentations on topics such as climate change, eco-friendly lifestyles and habitat restoration from 3 to 7 p.m. in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Tuesday in Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus.

**Tuesday**

**Billiards Tournament**

A **billiards tournament** will take place at 12:30 p.m. in the Game Room on the Brownsville campus and at the same time Wednesday in the Game Room on the Edinburg campus. Students can play for free and have a chance to earn VBucks. For more information, email studentunion@utrgv.edu or call 665-7989.

**Service Fair**

Students can learn about service opportunities and information on Service Saturdays from 12:30 to 1:20 p.m. in the Main Courtyard on the Brownsville campus. For more information, call 882-5111.

**Wednesday**

**National Nachos Day**

The **Student Union** will give out

free nachos starting at 12:15 p.m. in the Game Room on the Brownsville campus.

**Wellness Wednesday**

Students can get free **wellness checks** such as body mass index, blood pressure and glucose levels and body fat percentage from noon to 2 p.m. in the **Texas Southmost College Recreation Center** in Brownsville.

**Thursday**

**Super Smash Bros. Tournament**

The **Student Union** will host a Super Smash Bros. tournament at 12:30 p.m. in the Game Room on the Brownsville campus. Finalists will be awarded VBucks. For more information, email studentunion@utrgv.edu or call 665-7898.

**Women's Basketball**

The **UTRGV Women's Basketball Team** will face off against **Texas Southern University** at 7 p.m. in the Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus. Admission is free to all UTRGV students with a valid ID.

**Public Heritage Lecture**

**Frank G. Perez**, an associate professor of communication at the University of Texas El Paso, will present a lecture titled "**Juan de Oñate Controversy in El Paso: Fantasy Heritage, Hegemony and Cultural Representation in a West Texas Town**" at 3:30 p.m. in Liberal Arts Building North 1.101 on the Edinburg campus. The lecture is part of UTRGV's **Public Heritage Series**.

**Upcoming**

**One-on-One**

Texas Rising will host a **One-on-One**

conversation with Texas Senate District 27 Democratic Primary candidate **Sara Stapleton-Barrera** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Nov. 12 in the Student Union Palmetto Room on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Nov. 14 on the Brownsville campus (location to be announced). A One-on-One with **Ruben Cortez**, who is also seeking election to the District 27 seat in next spring's Democratic Primary, will take place from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Nov. 16 on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Nov. 19 on the Brownsville campus. Locations are to be announced.

**The MOLLY Prize**

The **MOLLY Prize for Best Student Journalism** is a new annual award for student reporting in Texas. Entries may be print, online, in video or audio on the basis of either a single piece or a series of up to four related articles or columns. The winner will receive one of two \$500 prizes from the **Texas Democracy Foundation** and the **Texas Observer**. Deadline for submission is Feb. 1. All MOLLY student journalism contest participants will also be eligible to take part in a mentoring program in either Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio, Austin or Rio Grande Valley areas. As part of the program, student journalists will be paired with working journalists for a networking opportunity in small group settings. For more information, visit [texasobserver.org/the-molly-prize-for-best-student-journalism-in-the-state-of-texas](http://texasobserver.org/the-molly-prize-for-best-student-journalism-in-the-state-of-texas) or email [kanin@texasobserver.org](mailto:kanin@texasobserver.org).

--Compiled by Brigitte Ortiz

## POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Oct. 21 and 24.



**Oct. 21**

**7:49 a.m.:**

A homeless man slept at the entrance to the Vaquero Plaza on the Brownsville campus. He was uncooperative with the officer, and it was revealed he had a criminal history. The man was issued a criminal trespass warning and escorted off UTRGV property.

**9:06 a.m.:** A staff member lost her university-issued keys in the Liberal Arts Building North on the Edinburg campus.

**10:35 a.m.:** A bicycle/auto accident occurred at the crosswalk by the University Recreation building on the Edinburg campus. Both the cyclist and driver were students. The cyclist claimed no injuries and declined medical services.

**11:32 a.m.:** A fire alarm was activated in the Marialice Shary Shivers building on the Edinburg campus. Smoke from the elevator triggered the smoke detector, and the building was evacuated. The Environmental Health & Safety staff labeled the elevator out of service and a work order was placed. The Edinburg Fire Department later cleared the building for re-entry.

**11:42 a.m.:** A student sent harassing messages to another student via a social media app in Edinburg. A police report was filed with the Edinburg Police Department for harassment.

**9:17 p.m.:** A student felt ill and fainted during a spin class at the University Recreation building on the Edinburg campus. The student was in and out of consciousness and emergency medical services transported her to Doctors Hospital at Renaissance.

**Oct. 22**

**6:18 a.m.:** U.S. Border Patrol agents detained four individuals from a

group of eight behind the Biomedical Research & Health building on the Brownsville campus. All four were from Mexico. U.S. Border Patrol agents searched for the other four but were unsuccessful.

**11:03 a.m.:** A non-affiliated visitor's parked, unattended vehicle sustained damage to the rear windshield in Lot E-5 on the Edinburg campus. A grounds staff member caused the damage while working on landscaping. Arrangements were made by Facilities management to cover repair costs.

**2:32 p.m.:** A staff member reported losing his university-issued key fob while attending training off campus in Sept. 2019.

**Oct. 23**

**4:07 a.m.:** An allegedly intoxicated non-affiliated woman was found inside the lobby area in Unity Hall on the Edinburg campus. She was found to be a possible danger to herself and others and was placed under arrest on charges of public intoxication.

**9:31 a.m.:** A student reported viewing another student's inappropriate Twitter video at the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. The Twitter account was viewed by officers, but the elements for crime were not met.

**10:07 a.m.:** A School of Medicine faculty member's credit card had three off campus unauthorized online transactions without his consent.

**12:12 p.m.:** A UTRGV staff member's cell phone was stolen after she accidentally left it behind in the women's restroom in the Liberal Arts Building North on the Edinburg campus.

**2:37 p.m.:** An officer detected the odor of burnt marijuana and contacted two students next to a vehicle in Lot E-32 on the Edinburg campus. The officer observed a burnt marijuana joint next

to the students, and they admitted to smoking marijuana while exhibiting signs of intoxication. The officer received consent to search the vehicle and found a cartridge containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and other drug paraphernalia. One of the students was placed under arrest on charges of possession of substance in penalty group 2 and was issued a citation for the drug paraphernalia. The other student was arrested on charges of public intoxication.

**Oct. 24**

**7:06 a.m.:** Several subjects were seen via border cameras running toward University Boulevard near the Brownsville campus. U.S. Border Patrol apprehended three individuals behind the Biomedical Research & Health building, and another three off campus. All six individuals were from Mexico.

**3:02 p.m.:** Drug paraphernalia was found in a lost backpack turned in to the police department lobby on the Edinburg campus. It was determined the drug paraphernalia did not belong to the owner of the backpack. The backpack was released to the student and the drug paraphernalia was submitted into evidence for proper destruction.

**7:12 p.m.:** A report submitted to the Office for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention about a sexual assault involving a student was disclosed to an officer on the Edinburg campus. The incident took place Oct. 22 in a parking lot on the Edinburg campus. The suspect is known to the victim, but the description of the suspect had not been provided at the time of the report. No other information was provided. A Timely Warning Notification was issued.

--Compiled by Klaudia Cedillo



# Registration alleviation

**Alejandra Yañez**  
THE RIDER

Students want to know what UTRGV is doing to make registration easier and who they can go to for advice on what classes to choose for the upcoming Spring 2020 semester.

This week's Ask the Expert questions are from biology freshman Rebecca Pelayo, graduate student Sandra Leal and computer science junior Henry Morales.

Registration for graduate students and students who made the President's and Dean's lists opened Oct. 25. Registration for seniors opened Oct.

Oct. 28, junior registration opened last Tuesday, sophomore registration

opened last Wednesday and freshman registration opened last Thursday.

Asked what questions she had regarding registration, Leal replied, "How often do they update the courses?"

Pelayo asked what high school credits transfer to the university.

"Prior to the fall semester, I did have some difficulty because I had a lot of holds and it was really tough for, like, registration or admissions office to take them off hold," Pelayo said. "So, like, technically, I didn't get my classes scheduled till ... a week prior to the classes starting."

Leal told The Rider that she

has also experienced holds on her account.

"I've had issues with, I guess, having to go through special permissions or certain restrictions like having to email professors for permission [to join the class]," Leal said. "Or, sometimes there's an error with my account and I have a hold on there that's not supposed to be there and then I have to go to U Central to get that fixed."

Recently transferring from Texas Southmost College, Morales said he had some trouble transferring his credits last semester, which interfered with his registration process, "because some classes didn't

substitute or some other classes did."

Morales said he has had to substitute a

course in the past and when asked how that experience was he replied, "So I just had to ask him if he could substitute the class from over there because some of them didn't, they didn't have the same number so, essentially, I had to ask him can I get a substitution for a certain class and they gave me some substitutions. It was slightly frustrating but it's understandable."

### Expert

University Registrar Sofia Montes shared some of her expert advice for students registering for Spring 2020 classes.

Some recently asked questions pertain to early access and how students can

## Ask the Expert: Fourth in a series



Eduardo Galindo/THE RIDER

Academic Adviser Luisa Allen helps kinesiology sophomore Ramon Garcia register for Spring 2020 classes last Thursday in the Academic Advising Center on the Brownsville campus. Students are welcome to visit the advising center for help with registration.

find out if they have access to early registration.

"And the answer to that is they'll receive an email if they have access to early registration, and they get that in their UTRGV email account within a week of early registration actually starting," Montes said.

For students asking about special permission to join a class or exceptions as to how students can get overrides for particular registration restrictions, Montes said, "[They] have to be handled by the department teaching

the class because they're the ones with the authority to determine whether or not an exception is appropriate for the student."

Asked how often courses at UTRGV are updated, Montes replied that different courses are offered every single semester. For example, classes that are offered in the spring may be similar to fall classes, but there also may be new ones and there may be others that aren't being offered in the spring that were available in the fall.

"It just varies widely

and sometimes the class is repeated every single semester and sometimes a class is only offered once a year and the colleges are responsible for determining what will be taught and when," Montes said.

In regard to courses that require prerequisites, Montes suggests that the best thing for students to do is to look up the classes that they want to take ahead of time so they can understand what the requirements are and have

See REGISTRATION, Page 10

# University community takes action to be eco-friendly



Amanda Vela/THE RIDER

Reusable containers and bottles are available for students to purchase to reduce waste on campus. Eco-Takeout containers are given to students with a meal plan and may be returned when they are finished.

**Maleny Ortega**  
and **Omar E. Zapata**  
THE RIDER

UTRGV's Auxiliary Business Services is working with Sodexo to reduce plastic waste on campus.

"We're working with our partner, Sodexo, on the food services side to try and implement strategies to reduce waste in the production of food on campus," said Roberto Cantu,

the executive director of Auxiliary Business Services. "They already have strategies in place to, kind of, reduce waste by. They have a program called Way To Waste. ... I do know that they do quite a bit already to reduce waste on campus."

Coca-Cola deploys bins on the Edinburg campus, which the Facilities Planning & Operations department then picks up when full. Cantu said Auxiliary Business Services wanted to implement something similar on the

Brownsville campus but the program has not been developed yet.

"That's not to say they're not going to do that in the future, but they weren't able to do it when it was requested in the spring," he said.

The director said the department can work closer with Chick-fil-A to try and reduce the usage of bags.

Cantu encourages students on the Edinburg campus to use the recycling bins.

"I think we need to train our cashiers," he said. "Possibly, we might be able to benefit from this. In some retail operations, bags are given out blindly, you know what I mean, it's part of the process. It could be a pack of gum and they'll give a bag. I think

we need to be a little more thoughtful in training our employees and determining whether or not a specific transaction, or the sale of an item, even necessitates the use of a plastic bag."

Auxiliary Services has worked closely with the Office of Sustainability in deploying different strategies for reducing waste.

Cantu said the university has implemented different initiatives to reduce the use of water and chemicals when washing dishes. Trays that were given out in the dining hall were eliminated due to waste.

"Not only the waste in having to wash all of these trays, but also in

the amount of food that was put on the trays and then not consumed," he said. "Many times, we were seeing too much of that food going in the trash can. ... Not only is it more eco-friendly but it's also saving all of that. Fiscally, it made more sense. At this point, we are obviously very aware of our environment. We realize that the operations could have an impact, you know, on our environment and we keep our eyes open."

Cantu said it is important that everyone help reduce waste.

"We only have one Earth and I think it's up to us to be good stewards and

I also think that it's important for these types of initiatives to be on the radar for Auxiliary Business Services operations," he said. "We have to do our part, everybody does. It's not just up to our students. ... I think everybody has to have some skin in the game when it comes to this."

Susie Gonzales, a registered dietitian and marketing coordinator for Sodexo, said the dining services contractor is always working on trying to reduce its organic and inorganic waste.

As a marketing coordinator, Gonzales is in charge of promotions, discounts and events on campus. As a dietitian, she works on implementing healthier menu options and bringing

## Recycle, reduce, reuse: Second in a series

See REDUCE, Page 11



# VAQUERO VOICE



## UTRGV PROGRAM IDEAS



"I feel like some of the majors, like some of the major types of things like law enforcement, engineering, architecture, all of those, they should have it. But not too much because, think about it, it would be like, you're working your butt off just so some kid from high school already has a for-sure spot. And, let's say that's the only spot, so you're not going to get it because of that one kid, even though you've worked so hard for it. That's why I don't think all of them should, but some of the major ones should."

**Fernando Martinez**  
Nursing sophomore

"Well, I kind of haven't thought about that for now, but I like the idea. I feel like it's a good thing so people have something to look forward to, something they're working towards that is sort of more secure. But, at the same time, it still gives other people the opportunity to come on the program."



**Itohan Edokpolo**  
Agricultural, environmental and sustainability sciences graduate student



"Well, English is very, it's pretty easy to get through, in my opinion, but I'm sure a lot of people have their own problems with it and I think it would be a good idea to have an early start to it in high school or, like, before coming to college. I know I took dual enrollment and it did help me when I needed it. As for other programs that are not within my own major, I see a lot of art students, fine arts, theatre, art in general or even music majors. They have a lot to do. They, you know, learn music, learn different instruments. I know they have to learn at least three or four instruments to complete some requirements for their major when it comes to music. For theatre, they have to take costume design, directing, acting, set design, all that kind of stuff and I think they would really benefit from early college programs where they could complete some of those lower-level classes and they could focus on the more demanding ones like directing 'cause I know that can be very demanding for a person and that kind of thing."

**Isabel Vazquez**  
English senior

"I would like to see more courses on programming because when I was in high school, I had already decided I was going to pursue computer science and, so, a major part of it is programming. So, in my high school, I really didn't have any choice. We didn't really have any classes that actually involved programming. In my opinion, it would be good if there were classes that UTRGV would offer for high school students to actually get hands-on experience in programming so that they have a perspective on what they want to major and pursue in their life."



**Moises Salazar**  
Computer science freshman

--Compiled by Robert Benavidez Jr. and Aaliyah Garza



# Women's worst enemies are other women



**Aaliyah Garza**

THE RIDER

Toxic femininity is hardly ever mentioned in mainstream culture. Toxic masculinity definitely has its consequences, but this is not a contest to see who has it worse. I'm just laying down some facts and opinions about a subject matter that few women want to acknowledge. Because to do so would imply that perhaps women are not always the victims, but the perpetrators.

If men and women are truly equal, then it would not be too much of a stretch to suggest that toxic femininity can exist. Is it not equal to contemplate that women can be capable of faults and evils as much as men can?

Sisterhood has never existed. Women have always competed with each other for resources. Resources that help them climb up the social ladder, such as men, appearances, social circles, careers, etc. That is just the way women have always survived, dating all the way back to the Stone Age and, for better or worse, it helped the female population evolve.

Women don't form relationships the same way men do. We are at fault of committing "relational aggression." In schoolyards, girl bullies will target mostly other females. They will ostracize, spread rumors/gossip, make comments on their victims'

appearance and grades. This is done with one goal in mind: to put down the females they feel are a threat to their climbing of the social ladder.

Smart and good-looking females are more likely to be targeted by female bullies, because they threaten females who lack these traits to enable them to be in a successful spot in society. Not only that, but the bullies will make assumptions that the only reason the victim holds these traits is solely for the purpose of gaining the attention of a male counterpart, attention

unfeminine, if you are doing it because that is who you are, if that is where your passion lies. But putting other women down for what you perceive as not empowering is not helping the cause at all.

The bullying does not stop there. It follows them to their workplace.

According to [economics.about.com](http://economics.about.com), "Queen Bees are women in the workplace that treat colleagues in a demoralising, undermining or bullying manner."

This is common in workspaces where the majority are men. These women are less likely to help other women get into or achieve a higher status within the company. They do this because they feel

**"If men and women are truly equal, then it would not be too much of a stretch to suggest that toxic femininity can exist."**

of others or to challenge and mock the bully. These assumptions of women simply obtaining desirable attributes are almost always assumed and attacked by other females.

Some females will often stray from traditional feminine attributes, interests and activities, all in the name of "not being like other girls." As they see traditional femininity as "weak," "lame," and "slutty," they act the way they do for the sake of being a unique female.

For example, some nerdy/geeky/alternative girls always berate "popular/pretty girls" as slutty, dumb and bimbos for daring to wear makeup, being in a relationship, partying and having their own sense of fashion. Granted, the bullying does go the other way around. It is not a crime to be traditionally feminine or

that resources are limited at the top, thus creating a "me vs. you" mentality. Often conducting a "rope ladder" effect, women climb to the top and pull the ladder, ensuring that no other women can climb. It's no wonder that most workplace females prefer to have a male boss, as opposed to a female one, according to [glassceiling.com](http://glassceiling.com).

Can all this be fixed? In theory, yes.

If women just admit to their toxic behavior and not blame the patriarchy, then we can, generally, make some progress. Again, this is not a contest to see who has it worse and we should not be having that mentality. It encourages the "us vs. them" mentality even more, instead of acknowledging the problem at hand.



# Mujeres ingenieras promueven estudio de STEM



Amanda Vela/THE RIDER

Más de 100 estudiantes mujeres de preparatoria matriculadas en la Academia de Matemáticas y Ciencias de UTRGV asisten a la Conferencia LEAD (Leading Educating and Advancing Diversity), el 25 de octubre en el Auditorio de la Biblioteca en Edinburg. El evento contó con ingenieras que compartieron sus historias para inspirar a las estudiantes a seguir carreras en STEM.

## Hania Rocio

THE RIDER

La Academia de Ciencias y Matemáticas de UTRGV organizó

la Conferencia LEAD (Leading Educating and Advancing Diversity) para sus 112 estudiantes mujeres de preparatoria para motivarlas a seguir

una carrera en Ciencias, Tecnología, Ingeniería y Matemáticas, o STEM (por sus siglas en inglés). Entre los períodos de 1993 y 2010, la presencia

de mujeres entre los científicos informáticos y matemáticos disminuyó del 31% al 25% debido a que la tasa de crecimiento de

los hombres fue mayor en esta área que la de las mujeres, según el sitio web de la National Science Foundation, nsf.gov.

La conferencia, que tuvo lugar el 25 de octubre en el Auditorio de la Biblioteca en el campus de Edinburg, se centró en modelos femeninos que compartieron sus historias con los estudiantes.

“Estoy muy emocionada de llegar a las chicas porque tenemos una representación muy baja de mujeres en ingeniería”, dijo Edna Orozco, profesora de fabricación e ingeniería industrial de UTRGV. “Siempre estoy feliz y emocionada de ver que estos eventos se llevan a cabo en la universidad”.

Las panelistas femeninas de ingeniería presentaron varios temas, como las diferentes áreas de estudio y los tipos de trabajos están disponibles para aquellos que tienen una educación en ingeniería.

“Es genial ver a estudiantes de MSA, teniendo a todas

las mujeres en una habitación y dándonos la oportunidad de hablar sobre lo que hacemos en ingeniería eléctrica y en ingeniería general”, dijo Laura Benítez, profesora de ingeniería eléctrica e informática en UTRGV. “Es una gran oportunidad para que vean que otras carreras hay”.

Los panelistas también destacaron la importancia de destruir los estigmas que conlleva ser mujer en el campo de la ingeniería.

“Es un campo dominado por hombres, pero eso no significa que [las mujeres] tengan que tenerle miedo”, dijo Karen Lozano, profesora de ingeniería mecánica en UTRGV. “A veces hay muchos conceptos erróneos o estereotipos. Por ejemplo, en ingeniería mecánica, la gente piensa ... eso no es algo femenino. No es un campo dominado por hombres porque son cosas masculinas lo que tienes que hacer. ... Solo espero que estas chicas se unan a nuestro departamento y las vea en nuestras aulas en el futuro”.

--Traducido por Mariana Gómez

# Reaccionan a cambios en ceremonias de graduación

## Maleny Ortega

THE RIDER

Los estudiantes que se gradúan están decepcionados y contentos con los cambios de sede en las ceremonias de graduación de UTRGV en diciembre.

María Fernanda Vila, estudiante de último año en servicios de rehabilitación, está decepcionada por el cambio de sede del Auditorio Jacob Brown en Brownsville al Centro de Convenciones Harlingen para la ceremonia de graduación de diciembre.

“Es porque mi familia es de México, así que tendremos que tomar más tiempo para cruzar el puente e ir a Harlingen”, dijo Vila. “Tenemos que tomarnos nuestro tiempo y creo que sería más útil para nosotros en Jacob Brown”.

Vila dijo que le gustaría tener la ceremonia de graduación en el auditorio porque está más cerca de la universidad.

“Algunas personas me dijeron que Harlingen es un poco más bonito y espacioso, así que espero que lo sea”, dijo ella.

Las ceremonias de graduación de otoño de 2019 ahora se llevarán a cabo en el Centro de Convenciones de Harlingen y en el Bert Ogden Arena en Edinburg, de acuerdo con funcionarios de la universidad.

Las ceremonias en el Centro de Convenciones de Harlingen se llevarán a cabo en varias ocasiones el 13 de diciembre, y en el Bert Ogden Arena el 14 de diciembre. Los estudiantes graduados



Robert Benavidez Jr./THE RIDER

Patricia López, estudiante de último año en mercadotecnia visita la mesa del Centro de Carreras el 23 de octubre durante UTRGV Fall 2019 Graduation Bash en el campus de Brownsville. También se muestra la asistente estudiantil del Centro de Carreras, Jacqueline López.

de Brownsville asistirán a las ceremonias en Harlingen y los estudiantes graduados de Edinburg asistirán en Edinburg. Los estudiantes de Harlingen pueden elegir a qué lugar asistirán.

En la primavera de 2019, las ceremonias de Brownsville se llevaron a cabo en el Auditorio Jacob Brown de Texas Southmost College y las ceremonias de Edinburg en el Centro de Convenciones de McAllen.

Dennise Hernández, una estudiante de último año en comunicación del campus de Edinburg, dijo que el cambio

al Bert Ogden Arena es benéfico porque es un espacio más grande.

“Por lo general, veo cómo las personas batallan para encontrar más boletos para su familia y ahora que recibí mi correo electrónico, dice que darán nueve boletos por persona en lugar de seis”, dijo Hernández. “Creo que eso es mejor ya que no tenemos que estar batallando para tener a las personas más importantes de nuestra vida allí de alguna manera, y también sé que se están graduando más personas. La tasa de graduación aumenta poco a

poco cada semestre, por lo que eventualmente la universidad habría tenido que mudarse a un lugar más grande”.

Ella quiere que las ceremonias de graduación se lleven a cabo en el Bert Ogden Arena debido al número de boletos.

“Solo espero que el Bert Ogden Arena funcione mejor para que puedan comenzar una nueva tradición, supongo”, dijo Hernández. “Espero que sea algo bueno, que esté allí para quedarse”.

Carolina Oviedo, estudiante de último año, que se graduará en matemáticas, asistirá a

la ceremonia de Harlingen y dijo que el cambio es inusual, pero la universidad se está acostumbrando a la fusión, por lo que constantemente tienen que moverse.

Oviedo dijo que si pudiera elegir dónde se llevarán a cabo las ceremonias de graduación, le gustaría que estuvieran en el Student Union lawn en el campus de Brownsville.

Dulce Herrera, una estudiante de último año, que se graduara en comunicación del campus de Edinburg, dijo que el cambio al Bert Ogden Arena es conveniente.

“Creo que es una conveniencia ya que somos hispanos en su mayoría aquí en el Valle [del Río Grande], por lo que tenemos grandes familias y sé que en la página de estudiantes de UTRGV en Facebook a lo largo de los años la gente ha estado pidiendo más boletos y cosas así. Así que creo que es una conveniencia para todos”, dijo Herrera.

Ella dijo que la espaciosa arena será un beneficio y piensa que UTRGV debería tener las ceremonias allí.

Aldo González, un estudiante de último año en matemáticas que también se estará graduando, dijo que el cambio lo tomó por sorpresa, pero está bien con ello.

“No lo veo como una desventaja, pero tampoco estoy obteniendo nada de eso, así que soy neutral al respecto”, dijo González. “Si tuviera que elegir, diría que desventaja porque tengo que conducir hasta allí”.



# Interview with a simulation

## UTRGV occupational therapy graduate students utilize new tool

**Klaudia Cedillo**

THE RIDER

The UTRGV Department of Occupational Therapy has begun to utilize Mixed-Reality Simulation (MRS) software to innovatively prepare students and better their interpersonal skills via virtual scenarios.

Roel Garcia and John Luna, clinical assistant professors in the Department of Occupational Therapy, developed the idea to utilize MRS a year ago after hearing the College of Education and P-16 utilizing the program.

“Some of our students were having a bit of difficulty with the interpersonal communications skills in terms of talking to clients, such as parents, patients and caregivers,” Garcia said. “So, [the MRS program] kind of popped up into my head.”

As of the interview, the occupational therapy students have experienced two simulation scenarios. The first of the scenarios involved a mother and her son, taking place Sept. 26 and 27 in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus. The second scenario also involved a mother and her son, but added a “cultural component” by making them Spanish-speaking only. This session took place Oct. 23 and

24 in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus.

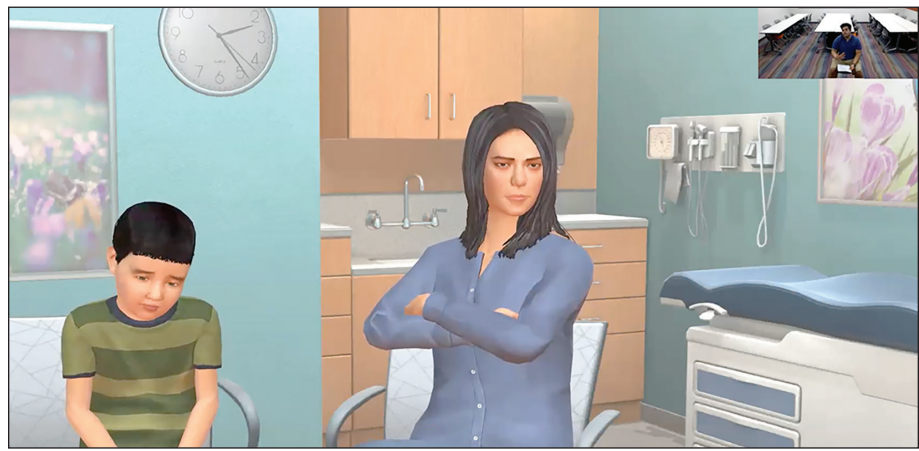
Luna said the “magic” behind the Mixed-Reality Simulator is the human dynamic it provides, allowing each student to get a unique experience tailored to how they approach the case in that situation.

“We’ve actually done two cases already,” Garcia said. “They’ve both gone great in my opinion. We’re planning on doing, hopefully, two more before the end of the semester. So, it’s something that we plan to continue using and, hopefully, expand on if possible.”

Luna said the next simulation will focus on intraprofessional communication.

“How successful you as a team are, many times can be based on the successful communication and interaction you have with members of your team,” he said. “And so ... we’re really going to be focusing on communication between the occupational therapist and the occupational therapy assistant ... we’re really looking at [if they can] facilitate a successful interaction in order to promote the best quality of care for the clients that they’re treating.”

Luna said the cases for the



COURTESY PHOTO

The Mixed-Reality Simulation provides students with real life situations. Clinical Assistant Professor John Luna (in set) exhibits what not to do when consulting with a patient by asking incorrect questions via Mixed-Reality Simulation.

simulations were made by Garcia and himself, drawing inspiration from their own experiences and challenges they’ve faced.

He said a lot of preparation is involved with making the simulations, meeting several times before letting students use it.

“The benefits that we’ve seen, I mean, in the short time that we’ve had [the simulations] for the students have been good,” Luna said. “And, we’re hoping to study this in the long term to see if we have some ... quality improvements and feedback from the practitioners in the community. Hopefully, they’ll notice some improvements there.”

Last Friday, Garcia and Luna presented the Mixed-Reality Simulation at the Texas Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference in Austin, where practitioners had the chance to try out a live demo.

“It’ll be interesting to see the way the practitioners could potentially integrate this into their programs,” Luna said.

He said they received positive feedback from practitioners who wanted to or were interested in how to utilize it, after presenting it Oct. 18 and 19 at the American Occupational Therapy Association Education Summit in Las Vegas.

Asked if this type of simulation was used before in their field, Luna replied, “Here on campus, yes. I’d say that we know of in the state of Texas, I’d say yes.”

Garcia said he was unsure how much UTRGV paid for the program, but it is available for all university employees to utilize at no cost, as far as the information he was given.

“I think it’s going to prepare [students] a little bit better, as opposed to going there without having practice,” he said. “This is a safe learning environment, so if they make mistakes, it’s OK. ... This is where you learn.”

Garcia said he thought the program was going to be a great tool for students to use to prepare for practice and said the department will use it as long as the program is available.

“We had the opportunity to have two different sessions with the simulation,” said Ruth Sanchez, an occupational therapy graduate student. “And it’s really, really interesting. It allows us to start practicing our communication skills, how it’s going to be, or how it could be in the clinic so some good days, some bad days. So, it’s really exposing us to what to expect in the future.”

Karin Garza, an occupational therapy graduate student, said interacting with the simulation was fun but also felt real. She said it was a good learning experience and appreciated the opportunity to experience it.

Sanchez and Garza said they both felt they improved on their communication skills from the simulation sessions.

“I feel like they’re actually preparing us for our actual career. ... We’re super grateful for what [our professors] are doing for us,” Sanchez said.



Fernando Ramirez/THE RIDER

The UTRGV Department of Occupational Therapy began clinical scenarios for its graduate students using the Mixed-Reality Simulation (MRS) program. The program allows students to simulate patient care and interaction.

### CREDITS

Continued from Page 1

time and probably money too, right,” Martinez said in an interview with The Rider last Tuesday. “So, it would be kind of unfair for people to come here and think ‘Oh, they accept them,’ and at the end, they have to take those classes [again], waste more money and waste more time on it.”

Montes said UTRGV not accepting technical and vocational courses is not an uncommon practice.

“So, this aligns with other expectations and requirements from other governing bodies too,” she said. “So, it’s not just done at UTRGV, it’s done in other institutions also.” Montes explained

technical or vocational classes are courses taken toward a two-year degree.

According to the UTRGV 2018-2019 Undergraduate Catalog, vocational or technical

**“It’s important to distinguish between what’s transferable and what’s degree applicable, because students can transfer credits towards UTRGV but depending on the nature of the course, whether it’s not technical or vocational, it might be applied toward the degree.”**

**Sofia Montes**  
University Registrar

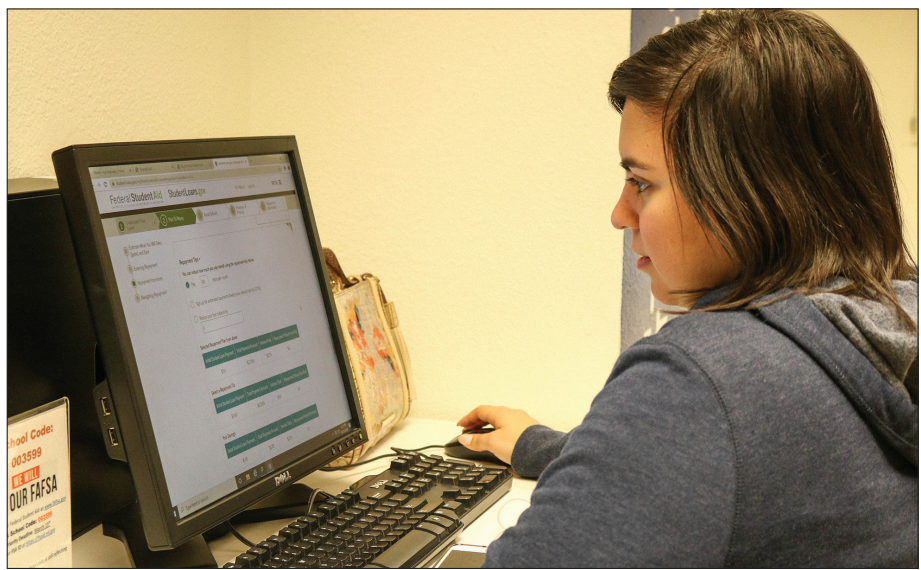
courses are “filing methods and vocational or technical training courses such as shop courses, welding, carpentry, plumbing and masonry are not transferable.” Montes also said Licensed Vocational

Nurse is another example of a vocational course.

Asked what courses are transferable to UTRGV, she replied, “It’s important to distinguish between

what’s transferable and what’s degree applicable, because students can transfer credits towards UTRGV but depending on the nature of the course, whether it’s not technical or vocational, it might be applied toward the degree.”

Montes advises students who have a hard time transferring their credits from other institutions to use their most current and complete transcripts. “That is the best thing to do and



Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER

Clinical rehabilitation counseling graduate student Valeria Gonzalez uses the computer Thursday at U Central on the Brownsville campus.

the Undergraduate Admissions Office will go through any received transcript to evaluate all incoming credits, and apply it as much as possible towards the

student core requirement and any other areas that it might fall into.”

For more information regarding transferable credits, visit the UTRGV 2018-2019

Undergraduate Catalog at [https://www.utrgv.edu/\\_files/documents/academics/catalogs/2018-2019-undergraduate-catalog.pdf](https://www.utrgv.edu/_files/documents/academics/catalogs/2018-2019-undergraduate-catalog.pdf).



# 'Honoring and remembering'

## Altars commemorate migrants and shooting victims



Aaliyah Garza/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Jose Villarreal and students in his race and ethnic relations class stand in front of their Día de los Muertos altar.



UTRGV sociology lecturer Jose Villarreal and students from his race and ethnic relations class created a Día de los Muertos altar in honor of the El Paso shooting victims and migrants that have died from attempting to cross the border. The altar was assembled last Thursday in front of the Department of Sociology office, located on the third floor of the Liberal Arts Building North.

### Omar E. Zapata

THE RIDER

Jose Villarreal, a sociology lecturer, and the Department of Sociology organized two altars for Día de los Muertos in honor of migrants that have died while trying to cross the Rio Grande border and the El Paso shooting victims.

"The idea came to have a different version of the Día De Los Muertos altar from the recent occurrences that our nation has been experiencing," Villarreal said.

The altars are located in front of the Department of Sociology office, located on the third floor of the Liberal Arts Building North.

The altars are filled with pictures of the victims and also traditional Día de los Muertos items.

The El Paso shooting, which he calls a "massacre," had a significant impact on the Mexican-American community. Twenty-two people died after a gunman

targeted Latinos in a Walmart.

"By honoring and remembering them as innocent victims, of someone who's very hateful, then this will further our knowledge of the gray situation that our nation is in and encourage our students to become more concerned with all humankind, regardless of race and color," Villarreal said.

His race and ethnic relations class helped put together the two altars by donating items and helping set them up.

One of those students, Carlos Garcia, a social work junior, explained the altars were to bring light to these issues and not to pretend these things never happen.

"This is happening every day, this is

**"By honoring and remembering them as innocent victims ... then this will further our knowledge of the gray situation that our nation is in and encourage our students to become more concerned with all humankind, regardless of race and color,"**

**Jose Villarreal**  
Sociology lecturer

happening right now," Garcia said.

The other altar was for migrants who have died at the border or traveling through the deserts of the Southwest and migrants all across the world who are in similar circumstances.

"We are also honoring the migrants who have perished at the border, not only here at the border, but in the Mediterranean, in Africa, in the Pacific, but also focus on the U.S.-Mexico border,"

Villarreal said. "These are forced migrations that people are fleeing these countries due to corruption ... abusive governments, violence and economic deterioration."

He tries to emphasize these real-world issues to his students.

"World capitalism is a cause of

migration, of these forced migrations, so we want to educate by showing sometimes the graphic photos of these persons who have perished," Villarreal said.

He blames the current administrative laws that make it hard for people to seek asylum.

"These are human beings that have perished seeking a better life and we should pressure our government for more comprehensive immigration reform to avoid the death of children, to avoid the death of parents, to avoid the death of people," Villarreal said.

Elizabeth Ibarra, a social work junior, also helped Villarreal with the altars.

"It's really sad that they're just trying to look for a better life for themselves and their families and they didn't make it," she said.

Ibarra said she has a small altar in her house that is dedicated to her mother. It has become a tradition in her home.

The altars will be on display until Friday.

## The Doodler

By Elizabeth Mendoza





# Strategic discussions

**Maleny Ortega**  
THE RIDER

Over 30 people attended the university's Strategic Plan Town Hall Tuesday and gave feedback on the different focuses of the plan while conversing with peers.

The event consisted of attendees who participated in conversations for 20-minute sessions. When time was up, attendees would switch to a different table if they chose to.

The plan's mission is to "transform the Rio Grande Valley, the Americas, and the world through an innovative and accessible educational environment that promotes student success, research, creative works, health and well-being, community engagement, sustainable development, and commercialization of university discoveries," according to UTRGV's Strategic Plan booklet.

Mark Kaswan, Academic Affairs faculty fellow for Strategic Initiatives and a political science associate professor, said the town hall was a great event.

"We had dozens of people come from all parts of the university," Kaswan said. "We had a session yesterday in Edinburg and then today it was in Brownsville and we had folks from administration, and then folks from other parts of the staff and we had faculty members."

He said the only thing missing was more student voices.

Kaswan said they received good feedback.

"It's one of those things where you can work on something for a long time and you try to be inclusive," he said. "You have a committee of people who are knowledgeable about a subject and they do these plans that ... reflect the things that they need to reflect and then you open it up to other people and you find out there's all these other perspectives and ideas and things that



Eduardo Galindo/THE RIDER

Christopher Gabler, an assistant professor in the School of Earth, Environmental and Marine Sciences and graduate student Ashley Bowers participate in the Strategic Plan Town Hall last Tuesday in Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus.

are really valuable and so, the event is really useful for that, for giving people an opportunity to come together in that way and have input and be engaged in that process and it's really, so, it's really valuable."

Kaswan hopes the conversations don't end with the event, but that attendees talk to their colleagues as well. He also hopes people make use of the Strategic Plan website, which has goals, objectives and metrics.

"Absolutely everything, every single page on the strategic plan website has a comment ... box for people to give us feedback, and, so, we encourage people to make use of that," Kaswan said.

He said that after receiving feedback, the strategic plan review committee will meet for a follow-up conversation on next steps.

"All of the comments, all of the feedbacks that we receive, we will

make use of and analyze it," Kaswan said, "which doesn't mean everything ... is going to, in some way, be reflected in our plans, but certainly everything does affect the way that we're thinking and the kinds of things we plan to include in the strategic, in our action plans."

The different focuses of the Strategic Plan, according to the booklet, include:

--**student success**, where the goal is to support students in achieving their academic goals and reaching their professional aspirations through integrated learning experiences. Key initiatives include supporting instruction through faculty development, curricular evaluation and course redesign, increasing access to courses across campuses and platforms, and providing excellent advising through highly trained advisers;

--**educational opportunities**, where the goal is to strategically expand educational opportunities from "pre-K to post-doc" to increase learning, research, creative endeavors and community-engaged scholarships for people in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond. Key initiatives include expanding existing and establishing new bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs and increasing access to educational programs through the development and implementation of innovative pedagogies and technologies;

--**research impacting the Rio Grande Valley and beyond**, where the goal is to increase the number and productivity of faculty and students engaged in research that improves the lives of people in the Rio Grande Valley. Key initiatives include attracting and retaining scholars engaged in research, building a research enterprise and increasing research opportunities;

--**health and medical education**, where the goal is to promote a culture of health and well-being for UTRGV and surrounding communities. Key initiatives include integrating, coordinating and leveraging programs and resources to support activities that enhance health, strengthening relationships with academic health programs, governmental agencies, hospitals, clinics and biomedical industry, and increase access to health and medical education programs;

--**community engagement**, where the goal is to foster sustainable community-university relationships to enrich scholarship, research, teaching, learning and creative activities while addressing critical societal issues and contributing to the public good. Key initiatives include increasing and strengthening community and educational outreach programs and opportunities, contributing to

See STRATEGIC, Page 11

# Students encouraged to enter STEM field

**Hania Rocio**  
THE RIDER

The UTRGV Mathematics and Science Academy hosted the Leading Educating and Advancing Diversity (LEAD) Conference for its 112 female high school students to motivate them to pursue a career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, or STEM.

Between 1993 and 2010, women's presence among computer and mathematical scientists declined from 31% to 25% due to the fact that men's rate of growth was higher in this area than women's, according to the National Science Foundation website, nsf.gov.

The conference, which took place Oct. 25 in the Library Auditorium on the Edinburg campus, focused on female role models who shared their stories with students.

"I am very excited to reach out to the girls because we have a very low representation of females in engineering,"

said Edna Orozco, a UTRGV manufacturing and industrial engineering lecturer. "I am always happy and excited to see that these events are taking place at the university."

Female engineering panelists presented on various topics, such as the different areas of study and what types of jobs are available for those who have an education in engineering.

"It's great to see MSA students, having all the females in one room and giving us a chance to talk about what we do in electrical engineering and in general engineering," said Laura Benitez, an electrical and computer engineering lecturer at UTRGV. "It's a great opportunity for them to see what other careers are out there."

Panelists also stressed the importance of destroying the stigmas that come with being a woman in the engineering field.

"It's a male-dominated



Amanda Vela/THE RIDER

The UTRGV Mathematics and Science Academy hosted the LEAD Conference for its female high school students Oct. 25 in the Edinburg Library Auditorium. The conference featured a panel of all female speakers, including professors from STEM-related fields and Vivian Incera, Dean of the College of Sciences.

field but that doesn't mean that [women] have to be scared of it," said Karen Lozano, a mechanical engineering

professor at UTRGV. "Sometimes there's a lot of misconceptions or stereotypes. For example, in mechanical

engineering, people think ... that's not a girly thing. It's not a male-dominated field because it's male things you have

to do. ... I just hope for these girls to join our department and see them in our classrooms in the future."



# Ready for WAC Tournament

**Juanita Maldonado**  
SPORTS REPORTER

For the sixth time in program history, the UTRGV Women's Soccer Team qualified for the Western Athletic Conference Tournament, which will take place this week at Championship Field in Seattle.

"It's always our goal to make the WAC Tournament," Head Coach Glad Bugariu said. "Obviously, that's what you need to do to be able to compete for the big prize. We think we're a team that can surprise people this year. We've played pretty well most of the time. I mean, we haven't scored as many goals as in years past, but we think we come in as the dark horse."

The first match of the quarterfinal round is slated for 6 p.m. Wednesday with the fourth seed facing off against the fifth seed. The game will be followed by match two at 9 p.m., in which the third seed will play against the sixth seed.

Semifinal rounds will take



Fernando Ramirez/THE RIDER

The women's soccer team runs drills last Thursday morning to prepare for the Western Athletic Conference Tournament this week. This will be the sixth time the team participates in the tournament.

place with games three and four Friday. The winner of match one will face off against the No. 1 seed in match three

at 6 p.m. At 9 p.m., the winner of match two will battle the No. 2 seed. The championship game

will take place at 3 p.m. and the winner will represent the WAC at the NCAA Tournament Nov. 15-17.

Last year at the WAC Tournament, UTRGV obtained its first-ever tournament game win against California State University at Bakersfield 4-3 in penalties during the first round of the tournament. The team then moved on to the semifinal round where it fell 2-0 to Seattle University.

This year, the team will rely on the unity that it has to move on in the WAC Tournament.

"This is probably the best group I've ever worked with in 16, 17 years of college coaching," Bugariu said. "They're united, they're professional, they're hard working, they have great team chemistry. It's been a real pleasure to work with them and I think that's really our strength."

As of last Thursday, UTRGV was fifth in WAC standings. The team played its last regular season game last Saturday against New Mexico State University. Results and new standings were unavailable as of press time.

# Coach Lowery leaving his mark on the court



FILE PHOTO

UTRGV Volleyball Head Coach Todd Lowery earned his 500th coaching victory Oct. 26 against California Baptist University. Lowery has been coaching the UTRGV Vaqueras since 2015. He previously coached the UTB/TSC and UTB volleyball teams.

**Angel De La Cruz**

SPORTS REPORTER

The UTRGV Women's Volleyball Team celebrated Head Coach Todd Lowery's 500th win Oct. 26 against California Baptist University.

The Vaqueras beat the Lancers 3 sets to 1 at the Fieldhouse to give Lowery not only the win for the night, but also his 500th coaching career victory.

Lowery has been the head coach for the women's volleyball team since 2015.

Before becoming a Vaquero, he already had four national championships under his belt (2002, 2006, 2011 and 2013), according to [goutrgv.com](http://goutrgv.com)

Lowery coached the National American University volleyball team to the NAIA National Championship in 2002 and then again in 2006, before transferring to the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College.

His first year at UTB/TSC, he made it to the NAIA quarterfinals, and to the semifinals the following year, ultimately leading the Scorpions to their first NAIA National Championship in 2011. In 2013, he led the UTB volleyball team to an NAIA National Championship.

"500 wins," Lowery said. "A lot of good players, a lot of good

teams over the course of the years and definitely something to be proud of. But you have to give credit to all the kids over the years and not just that, but the programs that I've been at."

He has set national, regional and personal records, including the 2006 NAIA National Coach of the Year award, 12 regional coach of the year awards (2002-2007 and 2009-2014) and one South Dakota Associate Press Coach of the Year

**"500 wins. A lot of good players, a lot of good teams over the course of the years and definitely something to be proud of. But you have to give credit to all the kids over the years and not just that, but the programs that I've been at."**

**Todd Lowery**  
Women's Volleyball Head Coach

award in 2002.

Lowery earned a master of education in education administration from Chadron State College in Nebraska, and a bachelor of education in physical education with a minor in athletic coaching, chemistry, and health and wellness from Black Hills State University in South Dakota, according to [goutrgv.com](http://goutrgv.com).

He said his philosophy is to care about the players and to also help them develop as people.

"I think that creates an environment of caring in our gym and when kids know that you care about them, they'll play really

hard for you," Lowery said.

Junior outside hitter Jackie Kingsbury said she has known Lowery since she was 8 years old.

"I've known coach since I was 8, because I attended my first volleyball camp at UTB when he was head coach there," Kingsbury said. "I was there for his 300th win and now it's awesome to see him on his 500th. He's very passionate about what he does and very passionate about who he recruits, and he wants to find that same passion in him and other people."

She said he is like a father figure.

"He preaches about effort and attitude, and those are the two things that you can control as a player," Kingsbury said.

"He's caring, he's like a father figure to a lot of girls that are not from here, and for me he's like my second dad. He's just a great person overall, which leads him to be a good coach."

Kingsbury and the team wish him "500 more."

"It's a nice number," Lowery said last Thursday. "Now it's 501."

UTRGV faced New Mexico State University last Saturday and as of press time, results were unavailable.

The Vaqueras will face off against Grand Canyon University 8 p.m. Thursday at the Fieldhouse.



**VOTING**  
Continued from Page 1

were appointed or elected.”  
**Proposition 2**--“The constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of additional general obligation bonds by the Texas Water Development Board in an amount not to exceed \$200 million to provide financial assistance for the development of certain projects in economically distressed areas.”

According to the LWV Voters Guide, “Proposition 2 would allow the Water Development Board to issue general obligation bonds for the Economically Distressed Areas Program (EDAP). The outstanding bonds could not exceed \$200 million. The bonds would be used to develop water supply and sewer projects in economically depressed areas of the state.”

“EDAP assists water infrastructure projects when the median income of a region is less than 75% of the state’s median income. The proposed amendment would give the Water Development Board the money to finance water and wastewater infrastructure in economically distressed areas.”

**Proposition 3**--“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of certain property damaged by a disaster.”

“Proposition 3 would allow the Texas Legislature to give a temporary property tax exemption in a governor-declared disaster area,” according to the guide. “The exemption would be 15%, 30%, 60% or 100%, depending on the amount of property damage. The local government would choose whether or not to adopt the temporary exemption and would determine how long the exemption would last.”

**Proposition 4**--“The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual income tax, including a tax on an individual’s share of partnership and unincorporated association income.”

An argument in favor of the amendment listed in the guide states, “Texas has a low-tax, pro-growth approach to economic expansion, and that is dependent on having no personal income tax.”

Among the arguments against Prop 4 in the guide is, “One reason Texans pay high property and sales taxes

Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

may be because Texas has no income tax. If Proposition 4 passed, these taxes would likely continue to increase, so Proposition 4 would not necessarily decrease the size of state government.”

Kaswan said the proposed amendment does not make it harder for the state to establish an income tax.

“But what it does is take away this provision that directs the income tax to certain kinds of things, property tax reduction and education,” he said. “All it really does is it removes the restriction that currently exists in terms of what the income tax could be used for.”

**Proposition 5**--“The constitutional amendment dedicating the revenue received from the existing state sales and use taxes that are imposed on sporting goods to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission to protect Texas’ natural areas, water quality, and history by acquiring, managing, and improving state and local parks and historic sites while not increasing the rate of the state sales and use taxes.”

According to the LWV Voters Guide, “Proposition 5 would require the Legislature to allocate the money raised from state sales taxes on sporting goods (i.e., hunting, fishing, outdoor equipment) to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission. Revenue from such taxes would be used to improve and manage state and local parks and historic sites, and to acquire new sites.”

“Proposition 5 closes a loophole in the current

law that prevents all the revenue raised by these sales taxes from being given to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission, thus allowing some of the money to be used to balance the state budget.”

**Proposition 6**--“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase by \$3 billion the maximum bond amount authorized for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.”

An explanation of the amendment in the guide states, “The proposed amendment would increase the maximum bond amount for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRI) from \$3 billion to \$6 billion. CPRI provides grants and supports programs that advance cancer research. The organization, begun in 2007, is currently set up to receive \$3 billion in funding until 2022.”

**Proposition 7**--“The constitutional amendment allowing increased distributions to the available school fund.”

According to the guide, “The School Land Board, an independent entity of the General Land Office, oversees the management, sale and leasing of more than 13 million acres of land for the Permanent School Fund. The State Board of Education can then make distributions from this fund to the Available School Fund. The revenue generated from the land is used to purchase real estate and make investments to help fund public education

through the Available School Fund. This proposition would increase from \$300 million to \$600 million the amount the General Land Office could distribute to the Available School Fund each year.”

**Proposition 8**--“The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the flood infrastructure fund to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects.”

LWV’s Voters Guide states, “Proposition 8 would create the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) as a special fund outside of general revenue. A one-time distribution from the Economic Stabilization Fund, also known as the ‘rainy day fund,’ would establish the FIF. The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) would distribute FIF funds to local governments through loans or, in some cases, as grants. The money would be used to establish and maintain flood control structures and drainage infrastructure throughout the state, especially in economically distressed areas.”

“If passed, Proposition 8 would require cooperation among all impacted parties. A local government would receive money from the FIF only if it worked with other governments in the region and listened to stakeholder concerns in public meetings. The local government would also have to submit a technical analysis of the plan, comparing it to other possible projects in the region, and a proposal to repay the loan.”

Kaswan said it seems obvious that people in the Rio Grande Valley would be “very

supportive” of the proposed amendment.

“It does mean that state taking on additional debt in order to pay for it, but it seems necessary,” he said. “The question is whether people in Odessa, Amarillo should be getting to vote on that one.”

**Proposition 9**--“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation precious metal held in a precious metal depository located in this state.”

“Texas opened a precious metals depository in 2018, run by a private company but overseen by the state government,” the guide states. “The Constitution requires all real and tangible personal property to be taxed on its value unless exempted. These ad valorem (property) taxes are imposed at the time of purchase or exchange of precious metals. Proposition 9 would exempt from taxation precious metals held in a precious metal depository in the state.”

Kaswan said it is possible for a tax authority to place a property tax on the metal that is held in a depository.

“Currently, none of them do so,” he said. “It’s imaginable that a city or a school board that has a metal depository in its jurisdiction could place a tax on the value of the metal and this ... amendment will prevent them from doing so.”

**Proposition 10**--“The constitutional amendment to allow the transfer of a law enforcement animal to a qualified caretaker in certain circumstances.”

According to the guide, “Proposition 10 would allow law enforcement animals to retire, and their former handlers or other qualified caretakers to adopt them with no fee. Law enforcement animals are currently considered as surplus property of the county, which means the county can only auction, donate, or destroy them. Proposition [10] would change the property laws to allow the animals to retire and be transferred to their original handler or another qualified caretaker with no adoption fee.”

Voters in Edinburg, Weslaco, La Joya, Edcouch and Alamo will also cast ballots for municipal posts. In Edinburg, Juan “Johnny” Garcia, Carlos Jasso, Marc Roque and Deanna “Coach” Dominguez are running for Place 3 councilmember; Place 4 councilmember David Torres is being challenged by David White; Incumbent municipal court judge Toribio “Terry” Palacios is facing opponent Alma Garza.

**REGISTRATION**  
Continued from Page 3

enough time to ask questions. Asked what she recommends students do to check their progress, Montes replied, “The best way for students to see if they’re on the right track for timely graduation is to check

Degree Works. Degree Works is available for undergraduate students by logging into ASSIST, and it’s helpful because it shows what classes are remaining and what classes have already been completed.”

For students concerned about not being able to schedule advising appointments, Montes said, “The

earlier you book an appointment, the more likely you are to be seen in advance of registration.”

She also recommends for transfer students to provide updated transcripts to avoid holds and issues with credits.

Montes’ final piece of advice for students registering for Spring 2020 is, “Register early, don’t wait and if

there’s a class that a student wants that is not available, definitely get on the waitlist.”

For more information on frequently asked questions about registration, visit <https://www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/regISTRATION/registration-errors/index.htm>.



**COMMENCEMENT**  
*Continued from Page 1*

attend in Edinburg. Harlingen students can choose which location they will attend.

In Spring 2019, the Brownsville ceremonies were held in the Texas Southmost College Jacob Brown Auditorium and the Edinburg ceremonies were held at the McAllen Convention Center.

Dennise Hernandez, a graduating mass communication senior from the Edinburg campus, said the change to the Bert Ogden Arena is beneficial because it is a bigger space.

"Usually, I see how people struggle to find more tickets for their family and now, I received my email and it says that there's going to be nine per person, instead of six," Hernandez said. "I think that's better since we don't have to be struggling to have, like, the most important people in our life there in a way and also I know that more people are graduating. The graduation rate is increasing little by little every semester, so eventually the university would have had to move on to a bigger place."

She wants the commencement ceremonies to be held at the Bert Ogden Arena because of the tickets.

"I just hope that the Bert Ogden Arena works best so that way they can start a new tradition, I guess," Hernandez said. "I hope that it's a good thing, that it's there to stay."

Carolina Oviedo, a

graduating mathematics senior, will attend the Harlingen ceremony and said the change is unusual, but the university is getting used to the merger, so they constantly have to move.

Oviedo said if she could choose where graduation ceremonies will be held, she would like them to be at the Student Union lawn.

Dulce Herrera, a graduating mass communication senior from the Edinburg campus, said the change to the Bert Ogden Arena is convenient.

"I think it's a convenience since we are mostly Hispanics down here at the [Rio Grande] Valley, so we have big families and I know on the UTRGV Students page on Facebook over the years people have been asking for more tickets and stuff like that, so I think it's a convenience for everyone," Herrera said.

She said the spacious arena will be a benefit and thinks UTRGV should have the ceremonies there.

Aldo Gonzalez, a mathematics senior who is also graduating, said the change caught him off guard but it is OK.

"I don't see it as a disadvantage, but I'm not gaining anything from it either, so I'm neutral about it," Gonzalez said. "If I had to choose, disadvantage because I have to drive over there."

He would also like the ceremonies to be held on the Student Union lawn.

Lisa Garza, a graduating

communication studies senior, said the arena is a great choice.

"I'm happy they actually did, just because we're, you know, a Latino-based population here and it gives us more opportunity to get our family to be able to attend," Garza said. "I'm really happy about that."

She said the McAllen Convention Center is nice, but the arena is bigger.

"We'll see how it goes," she said. "I'm excited to see how it's going to go. I know this is the first time it's going to be done. I'm sure it's going to go really smoothly and, hopefully, with this change we'll just keep improving from there and more people will get to enjoy the whole experience."

In an email sent to The Rider on Tuesday, Brownsville Mayor Trey Mendez said UTRGV should reconsider moving commencement to Harlingen.

"The decision to move the Brownsville portion of the graduation to another city for Fall 2019 is something that I wish UT-RGV would reconsider," Mendez wrote in the email. "Especially in light of the continued support that the university receives from the City of Brownsville and the many thousand students that attend on a daily basis."

In the Harlingen Convention Center, ceremonies will be as follows:

**--9: a.m.:** College of Liberal Arts

**--noon:** College of

Engineering and Computer Science, College of Health Professions, Robert C. Vackar College of Business & Entrepreneurship, School of Nursing and School of Social Work

**--3 p.m.:** College of Education and P-16 Integration, College of Fine Arts, College of Sciences

In the Bert Ogden Arena, ceremonies will be as follows:

**--9 a.m.:** Robert C. Vackar College of Business & Entrepreneurship, College of Health Professions, School of Nursing and School of Social Work

**--1 p.m.:** College of Education and P-16 Integration, College of Engineering and Computer Science, and College of Science

**--5 p.m.:** College of Fine Arts and College of Liberal Arts

As The Rider reported on Oct. 18, the university changed the venues for this year because the auditorium and convention center were already booked, according to Patrick Gonzales, associate vice president for University Marketing & Communications and university spokesman.

"Commencements have been some of the best events that we've had every semester at the university, and we expect it to be just as exciting and special for our students and their guests," Gonzales said in a phone interview Oct. 18.

Asked if the changes were permanent, he said nothing is permanent.

"We're always going to have to be flexible with that because we're using, you know, other facilities but the key for us is just, one, to be able to announce it with enough time so our students can inform their guests and two, to make sure that it's not taking away from the actual ceremony," Gonzales said. "We know that commencement is huge and no matter what, we're always going to make sure that we're making the best decision to make sure we're putting out a great ceremony for these students who deserve it."

Students who will graduate in the Bert Ogden Arena will be given nine tickets for guests and distribution of the tickets will begin at 9 a.m. Dec. 2. and end at 4 p.m. Dec. 6 in the Edinburg U Central, according to an email sent Oct. 17 by University Registrar Sofia Montes.

Those who will graduate in the Harlingen Convention Center will be given six tickets for guests and distribution of the tickets will be at the same times and days in the Brownsville U Central.

The reason Brownsville graduating students receive less tickets for guests is because of the capacity of the convention center compared to the arena.

The Rider tried to contact Edinburg Mayor Richard Molina, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez and Cameron County Judge Eddie Treviño Jr. for comment but calls have not been returned.

**REDUCE**

*Continued from Page 3*

awareness to health and wellness.

"First, we try to reduce and reuse and then recycle," she said. "So, we go through all those steps and we always want our consumers ... to be a part of that as well."

Gonzales said they are trying to reduce waste, not just at the dining hall, but at all their retail locations across the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses.

"We want to know how many students come through, what's favored, what's least favored, so that way we're not producing a lot of food that is just going to go to waste," she said.

Sodexo is able to pinpoint how much to make of certain food options, which helps in reducing the amount of food that goes to waste. At the end of each meal period, if something could be reused for the next, Gonzales said it will, but the dining service always keeps its safety standards in place.

Another way Sodexo tries to reduce waste is working hand in hand with vendors to use as little packaging as possible.

"We choose to go with the packages that have minimal packaging," she said. "So, like, our ketchup, mayo and mustard, that comes in one rather than a bunch of tiny little ones."

Sodexo's catering service also works on trying to reduce waste. It offers biodegradable options, such as knives, bowls, napkins, boxes, bags, cups and lids for events, instead of using plastic, at an additional price.

"We have worked closely with the Office of Sustainability and we're really trying to implement all biodegradable paper products on campus, and so this past semester we did implement biodegradable straws at all of our locations and that's at no additional charge," Gonzales said.

She said some ideas to better promote reducing waste are to collaborate with other departments and create awareness.

She encourages students to purchase reusable utensils they can carry around to help further reduce waste.

Marisol Cervantes, president of the Environmental Awareness Club, said she did not know about Sodexo's biodegradable catering option but thinks it is a good idea.

"I think it's a great option that should be switched from going to plastics to just permanently biodegradable," Cervantes said. "Plastic stays on Earth for hundreds of thousands of years. So by having compostable disposables, you would have a lot less waste and would go back into the Earth sooner."

She told The Rider about a special collaboration between the Office

of Sustainability, Environmental Awareness Club members and other people interested in reducing food waste on campus.

"The food recovery group is in the process of finding out where the food waste is coming from and how we can obtain that food waste to, instead of letting it go to waste, we can use it for, like, giving it out to people who are in need of it," Cervantes said.

Roy Cantu, Student Government Association vice president, said the organization is looking for ways to promote the reduction of waste on campus.

"We're aware that there's not really recycling happening within the United States, so it's not just in the university," Roy Cantu said. "Now, to try to push it, it's kind of a little more sensitive because students actually vote on, you know, having the Green [Fund] fee but, we're looking. We're doing our research, trying to see what we can do, what we can implement within the campus itself to be able to reduce the waste and if we can reduce it, what can we do to that waste and make it something positive for the university."

Green fees are used to support campus efficiency and student projects in an effort to initiate and support advancements in sustainability at schools, according to the National Association of Student Personnel

Administrators website (naspa.org).

As The Rider previously reported, the Student Government Association voted Oct. 17 to establish a referendum on a Green Fund fee.

With the Green Fund fee, Roy Cantu said students would be more aware of what is going on within the university and country. Still, the vice president asks students to help.

"We do ask for the students to help us a little," he said. "You walk around campus, you see trash, you see trash in our lake. Why? Because students, maybe it's not their fault, sometimes they throw it away and it flies out. So, we're asking for the students to help us, as well, to reduce that."

Roy Cantu said it is important to maintain an eco-friendlier campus for future generations.

"It's not so hard to pick it up and throw it away," he said. "It takes 2 seconds. ... We live in this home. We're leaving this university itself for future generations. The planet, if we don't take care of it, who's going to take care of it?"

The vice president hopes students will help and be considerate of how they dispose of trash.

"Help us help you," Roy Cantu said. "If you could use less trash within yourself, be able to reduce trash within yourself, maybe it's a small contribution but along the way it's going to add up."

**STRATEGIC**

*Continued from Page 8*

community wealth and asset building through partnerships, and facilitating and advancing public discourse around issues of local, regional, national, and global significance;

**--bilingual, bicultural, biliterate**, where the goal is to build UTRGV as a bilingual, bicultural and biliterate university. Key initiatives

include supporting the development of coursework and programs that incorporate bilingual, bicultural and biliterate initiative, engaging faculty in community-based initiatives to build B3 programs and elevating the value and presence of biculturalism, the Spanish language and bilingualism;

**--campus climate and professional development and growth for faculty and staff**, where the goal

is to cultivate a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing climate for all faculty and staff. Key initiatives include increasing recruitment and retention of excellent and diverse faculty and staff, strengthening initiatives to recognize and reward faculty and staff excellence, and engaging and empowering faculty and staff through shared governance, accountability, and transparency;

**--globalization**, where the

goal is to foster a globally-connected university culture. Key initiatives include increasing global awareness and perspectives on campus, stimulating student learning through the expansion of study abroad opportunities and expanding global partnerships that align with UTRGV priorities;

**--sustainability**, where the goal is to institutionalize sustainability throughout the university and promote

sustainability awareness in the community. Key initiatives include collaborating with community partners on shared sustainability goals, encouraging and supporting sustainable community-based entrepreneurial initiatives and increasing performance with an annual sustainability assessment program.

Metrics will be used in each initiative to measure its success.



**CAMBIOS**  
*Continuación de Página 5*

A él también le gustaría que las ceremonias se celebraran en Student Union lawn en el campus de Brownsville.

Lisa Garza, estudiante de último año en comunicación, dijo que la arena es una gran opción.

“Estoy feliz de que realmente lo hayan hecho, solo porque somos, ya sabes, una población de origen latino aquí y nos da más oportunidades para que nuestra familia pueda asistir”, dijo Garza. “Estoy muy feliz por eso”.

Ella dijo que el Centro de Convenciones de McAllen es agradable, pero la arena es más grande.

“Veremos cómo va”, dijo ella. “Estoy emocionada de ver cómo va a ir. Sé que esta es la primera vez que se hará. Estoy segura de que todo irá muy bien y, con suerte, con este cambio seguiremos mejorando a partir de ahí y más personas podrán disfrutar de la experiencia”.

En un correo electrónico enviado a The Rider el martes, el alcalde de Brownsville, Trey Méndez, dijo que UTRGV debería reconsiderar el traslado a Harlingen.

“La decisión de trasladar la parte de la graduación de Brownsville a otra ciudad para el otoño de 2019 es algo que desearía que UT-RGV reconsiderara”, escribió Méndez en el correo electrónico. “Especialmente a la luz del continuo apoyo que la universidad recibe de la ciudad de Brownsville y de los muchos miles de estudiantes que asisten a diario”.

En el Centro de Convenciones de Harlingen, las ceremonias serán las siguientes:

- 9 a.m.: Facultad de Artes Liberales
- medio día: Facultad de Ingeniería y Ciencias de la Computación, Facultad

de Profesiones de la Salud, Facultad de Negocios y Emprendimiento Robert C. Vackar, Escuela de Enfermería y Escuela de Trabajo Social.

--3 p.m.: Facultad de Educación e Integración P-16, Facultad de Bellas Artes y Facultad de Ciencias.

En el Bert Ogden Arena, las ceremonias serán las siguientes:

--9 a.m.: Facultad de Negocios y Emprendimiento Robert C. Vackar, Facultad de Profesiones de la Salud, Escuela de Enfermería y Escuela de Trabajo Social.

--1 p.m.: Facultad de Educación e Integración P-16, Facultad de Ingeniería y Ciencias de la Computación y Facultad de Ciencias.

--5 p.m.: Colegio de Bellas Artes y Colegio de Artes Liberales.

Como informó The Rider el 18 de octubre, la universidad cambió los lugares para este año porque el auditorio y el centro de convenciones ya estaban reservados, según Patrick Gonzales, vicepresidente asociado de Marketing y Comunicaciones de la Universidad y portavoz de la universidad.

“Las ceremonias de graduación han sido algunos de los mejores eventos que hemos tenido cada semestre en la universidad, y esperamos que sea igual de emocionante y especial para nuestros estudiantes y sus invitados”, dijo Gonzales en una entrevista telefónica el 18 de octubre.

Cuando se le preguntó si los cambios son permanentes, dijo que nada es permanente.

“Siempre tendremos que ser flexibles con eso porque estamos usando otras instalaciones, pero la clave para nosotros es solo una, poder anunciarlo con tiempo suficiente para que nuestros estudiantes puedan informar a sus invitados y dos, para asegurarse de que no se está quitando

nada de la ceremonia real”, dijo Gonzales. “Sabemos que el comienzo es enorme y pase lo que pase, siempre nos aseguraremos de tomar la mejor decisión para asegurarnos de organizar una gran ceremonia para estos estudiantes que lo merecen”.

Los estudiantes que se gradúen en el Bert Ogden Arena recibirán nueve boletos para invitados y la distribución de los boletos comenzará a las 9 a.m. del 2 de diciembre y finalizará a las 4 p.m. el 6 de diciembre en Edinburg U Central, según un correo electrónico enviado el 17 de octubre por la Registradora Universitaria Sofia Montes.

Aquellos que se gradúen en el

Centro de Convenciones de Harlingen recibirán seis boletos para los invitados y la distribución de los boletos se realizará al mismo tiempo y días en Brownsville U Central.

La razón por la cual los estudiantes graduados de Brownsville reciben menos boletos para los invitados se debe a la capacidad del centro de convenciones en comparación con la arena.

The Rider intentó contactar al alcalde de Edinburg, Richard Molina, al juez del condado de Hidalgo, Richard Cortez, y al juez del condado de Cameron, Eddie Treviño Jr., para que hicieran comentarios, pero las llamadas no han sido devueltas.

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