

Section I – Overview

Below are the key elements of the inaugural tuition and fee rates of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). The plan, developed by a task force comprised of staff and students, is structured to promote student access and success while ensuring affordability, transparency, and predictability. Over a period of five months, the task force conducted research, ran models, and considered feedback from U. T. Brownsville (UTB) and U. T. Pan American (UTPA) students, faculty, staff, and student government leadership gathered through surveys, involvement in committee meetings, and open forums. U. T. System Administration provided guidance throughout the development process, including legal interpretations, to ensure compliance with statutes as well as Regental and state rules.

Mandated guaranteed rates for undergraduate students. Undergraduate students will enjoy a predictable, transparent rate structure which will motivate them to graduate in a timely manner. The institution will avoid the administrative expenses associated with offering and maintaining both variable and fixed price plans. Continuing students, regardless of institution of initial enrollment, will be assigned rates based on college start and prior hours earned, as outlined below.

Undergraduate Cohort	College Start	Hours at Start of Fall 2015
UG1	1 year guarantee	Before Fall 2014
UG2	2 year guarantee	Before Fall 2014
UG3	3 year guarantee	Before Fall 2014
UG4	4 year guarantee	Before Fall 2014
UG4	4 year guarantee	Academic Year 2014 - 2015
UGE (Entering)	4 year guarantee	Fall 2015 and after

Mandated guaranteed rates for graduate students. Masters students will be provided a 2-year guarantee; doctoral students will be provided a 4-year guarantee. To encourage growth of graduate programs, baccalaureates may use unexpired time in their guarantee periods for graduate coursework at rates in effect for their entering cohorts.

Capping tuition rates at 12 SCH. To promote larger course loads and reduce time-to-degree, tuition and mandatory fees will be capped at 12 hours, except for lab and supplemental instruction fees. A student taking more than 12 hours will incur no additional academic charges. This incentive functions as an “instant” built-in rebate.

Uniformity of rates. To foster a “one university, multiple campuses” identity, the institution will charge the same rates regardless of location and mode of delivery. Unlike many institutions, including UTB and UTPA, UTRGV will not impose additional charges for online and hybrid classes.

Simplified fee structure. UTRGV will not adopt the information technology, athletics, library, advising, international, and records/registration mandatory fees currently charged at UTB and UTPA. In addition, except for statutorily required lab and supplemental instruction fees, college and course fees are not being adopted. Instead, designated tuition and other revenue streams will support these activities and, importantly, allow the institution to move resources to areas of needs as those needs change from year to year.

No charges for concurrent and dual enrollment. In order to promote transition to college, reduce time-to-degree, reduce the cost to obtain a degree, and to better utilize university facilities, UTRGV will not impose charges to high school students earning college credit through concurrent and dual enrollment programs.

Affordability and access. UTRGV will utilize an estimated \$4.0 million in additional tuition set-asides to minimize the impact of the tuition and fee rates on students and, in doing so, continue the legacy of affordable access to higher education in the region. Although the average undergraduate financial aid applicant would incur a Fall 2015 out-of-pocket increase of \$285 over the Fall 2014 rates, the institution will develop a program whereby no students with family incomes below a certain level are faced with out-of-pocket costs for tuition and fees. In addition, a summer bridge program is being deployed to help ensure that all college-worthy students are prepared for university work.

Section II – Proposed Total Academic Cost (TAC)¹

**Resident Undergraduate Students
Enrolled in 15 SCH, by Cohort**

College Start (Earned Hours)	Fall 2015 UTRGV	Fall 2014 UTB	Fall 2014 UTPA
	TAC	TAC	TAC
UG1 – Before Fall 2014 (90+ SCH)	\$3,305	\$3,018	\$3,141
UG2 – Before Fall 2014 (60 – 89 SCH)	\$3,425	\$3,018	\$3,141
UG3 – Before Fall 2014 (30 – 59 SCH)	\$3,545	\$3,018	\$3,141
UG4 – Before Fall 2014 (0 – 29 SCH)	\$3,605	\$3,018	\$3,141
UG4 – Fall 2014 to Summer 2015	\$3,605	\$3,018	\$3,141
UGE – Fall 2015 to Summer 2016	\$3,665	\$3,018	\$3,141

**Non-Resident Undergraduate Students
Enrolled in 15 SCH, by Cohort**

College Start (Earned Hours)	Fall 2015 UTRGV	Fall 2014 UTB	Fall 2014 UTPA
	TAC	TAC	TAC
UG1 – Before Fall 2014 (90+ SCH)	\$9,155	\$8,816	\$8,665
UG2 – Before Fall 2014 (60 – 89 SCH)	\$9,275	\$8,816	\$8,665
UG3 – Before Fall 2014 (30 – 59 SCH)	\$9,395	\$8,816	\$8,665
UG4 – Before Fall 2014 (0 – 29 SCH)	\$9,455	\$8,816	\$8,665
UG4 – Fall 2014 to Summer 2015	\$9,455	\$8,816	\$8,665
UGE – Fall 2015 to Summer 2016	\$9,515	\$8,816	\$8,665

Note: Proposed rates have incorporated the increase in statutory tuition for non-resident students from \$412 per SCH in Fall 2014 to \$440 per hour in Fall 2015. Without the increase in non-resident statutory tuition, increases above the total academic costs charged at UTPA and UTB in Fall 2014 range from 0% - 5% depending on the college start designation.

**Resident and Non-Resident Graduate Students
Enrolled in 9 SCH**

Residency	Fall 2015 UTRGV	Fall 2014 UTB	Fall 2014 UTPA
	TAC	TAC	TAC
Resident	\$3,260	\$2,232*	\$2,568
Non Resident	\$6,770	\$5,689*	\$5,903

¹ Total Academic Cost (TAC) represents the total of statutory tuition, designated tuition, mandatory fees, and average course fees for an undergraduate student enrolled in 15 semester credit hours (SCH). For graduate students, the total represents the sum of tuition, mandatory fees, and average course fees required for enrollment in 9 SCHs (except that, as noted above, UTB graduate TAC does not include average course fees).

Section III – Mandatory Fee Structure

Below is a comparison of UTB, UTPA, and proposed UTRGV mandatory fees. These mandatory fees are included in the above tables that summarize total academic cost.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS – 15 SCH

Mandatory Fees	UTB Fall 2014	UTPA Fall 2014	UTRGV Proposed
University Services Fee	--	--	\$349.20
Student Services Fee	\$150	\$210	\$249.96
Recreation Fee	\$79	\$75	\$75
Medical Services Fee	\$24.20	\$27.35	\$30
Student Union Fee	--	\$30	\$30
Information Technology Fee	\$225	\$153.75	--
Athletic Fee	\$105	--	--
Library Fee	\$75	\$48.75	--
Advising Fee	\$50	\$25	--
Records/Registration Fee	\$10	\$10	--
International Education Fee	\$2	\$1	--

GRADUATE STUDENTS – 9 SCH

Mandatory Fees	UTB Fall 2014	UTPA Fall 2014	UTRGV Proposed
University Services Fee	--	--	\$261.90
Student Services Fee	\$108	\$126	\$187.47
Recreation Fee	\$79	\$75	\$75
Medical Services Fee	\$24.20	\$27.35	\$30
Student Union Fee	--	\$30	\$30
Information Technology Fee	\$153	\$92.25	--
Athletic Fee	\$63	--	--
Library Fee	\$45	\$29.25	--
Advising Fee	\$25	--	--
Records/Registration Fee	\$10	\$10	--
International Education Fee	\$2	\$1	--

Section IV – Average College and Course Fees

As discussed above, most college and course fees currently charged at UTB and UTPA will not be adopted by UTRGV. However, lab and supplemental instruction fees will be charged as required respectively by Sections 54.501 and 54.051(l), *Texas Education Code*. These estimates are included in total academic cost.

Level	UTB Fall 2014	UTPA Fall 2014	UTRGV Proposed
Undergraduate – 15 SCH	\$53.74	\$73.76	\$18.75
Graduate – 9 SCH	n/a	\$83.88	\$11.25

Section V – Tuition for Repeated and Excessive Credit Hours

\$150 per hour will be added when attempting a class for the third and subsequent times. \$50 per hour will be added when the hours previously attempted exceed applicable limits.

Section VI – Medical School Tuition and Fee Rates

Tuition and fees for medical students include statutory tuition, designated tuition, mandatory fees, and additional fees required for medical education including clinical skills fees, liability/malpractice insurance fees, lab and testing fees, educational software or electronic textbook fees, and immunization fees (not all fees are charged at all state medical institutions). UTRGV has not yet determined the rate for health insurance. Therefore, *health insurance is not included* in the rates listed below.

Proposed rates for UTRGV resident and non-resident medical students:

Proposed Rates for first Medical School entering cohort Fall 2016 – Spring 2017

Resident Rate <i>(Without Health Insurance)</i>	\$18,298
Non-Resident Rate <i>(Without Health Insurance)</i>	\$31,398

A comparison of national mean and median rates, Assoc. of American Medical Colleges:

AAMC National Comparison*	Average	Median
Public		
Resident	\$30,868	\$32,434
Non Resident	\$54,786	\$55,949
Private		
Resident	\$49,345	\$50,849
Non Resident	\$49,374	\$50,995

Source: Association of American Medical College, Data on 2014-2015 Tuition and Fees

Statutory Authority

As a new and distinct university, UTRGV may charge any fee permitted by law for universities generally.

In addition, UTRGV may charge any fee authorized by law for UTB or UTPA, subject to the limitations prescribed by those laws. (Sec. 79.02(g), *Education Code*: “The board may impose and collect any fee authorized by prior law, as that law existed at the time the applicable university was abolished, for The University of Texas at Brownsville or The University of Texas Pan American, as determined by the board and subject to the limitations provided by the prior law authorizing the fee.”) Section 79.02(g) effectively authorizes the board to pick and choose between the statutory fee authority in relation to UTB and the statutory fee authority in relation to UTPA, and may choose to use the authority with the higher rate.

The fee statutes contain ambiguities when dealing with a new university, as opposed to existing universities with an existing student body to approve fees or increases in fees. In addition, the fee statutes are not designed to accommodate a single institution with multiple campuses, even though the statutes do accommodate a student enrolled at multiple institutions.

SB 24, 83rd Legislature, creating UTRGV gives the Board of Regents broad powers:

- 79.02(e): “The authority of the board under this section to achieve maximum operating efficiency of the university and to provide for the...administration...of the university prevails over other law....”
- 79.02(f): “The board has all the powers and duties provided by prior law...in regard to...any facility, operation, or program that is transferred to the university.”
- 79.04: “The board shall make any other rules and regulations for the operation, control, and management of the university as may be necessary for the conduct of the university as a university of the first class.”

In addition, in relationship to fees, the attorney general has recognized that “governing boards...generally are given broad powers which will not be interfered with in the absence of a clear showing that it has acted arbitrarily or has abused the discretion vested in it,” that “the amount of fees and the basis of their allocation to various students will depend on the facts existing at each institution,” and that what “fits one may not fit another.” Such fees, “when set in good faith, will not be subject to reversal upon judicial review except in the event of an abuse of discretion.” Op. Tex. Att’y Gen. No. H-284A (1974)

All of these fees are initial fees for UTRGV students. Current UTB or UTPA students are not experiencing an “increase” in fees. It may well be that a student at the Brownsville campus will pay a different and perhaps higher fee than the same student paid at UTB, but that would be true if the student enrolled at UTSA or UTEP.

Student Union Fee: The UTPA statutory authority, Sec. 54.542, is capped at \$30. The UTB statutory authority, Sec. 54.546, has a minimum of \$34.50 and a maximum of \$70, but also has limitations of being dependent on an agreement with Texas Southmost College (TSC).

Recreation Center Fee: UTPA statute limits the fee to \$75. Brownsville statute limits the fee to \$79 and states that the rate shall be identical to the TSC rate (currently \$79).

Student Services Fee: The cap on compulsory student services fee is \$250; if the fee is more than \$150, the increase does not take effect unless approved by a majority vote of the students. The fee cap “authorized by prior law” for purposes of UTRGV and Section 79.02(g) is the \$250 cap authorized for UTPA. No additional election is necessary because the UTPA previously conducted a student referendum to increase the fee, resulting in legal authority for a \$250 cap.

University Services Fee: Section 55.16, *Education Code*, provides the Board of Regents with the broadest general fee authority, including fees for “services” and for the “availability of...activities, [and] operations.” This statutory authority allows a university to combine many incidental and mandatory fees into a single fee, such as the prior Information Technology, Athletic, Library, Advising, International Education, and Registration/Records fees at UTB and UTPA, for purposes of simplifying the fee structure at UTRGV.

Medical Services Fee: The board is authorized by Section 54.50891 to charge a medical services fee not to exceed \$55.

College/Course Fees: These fees are authorized by Section 54.504, *Education Code*, and other specific laws such as Section 54.051(l), authorizing course fees for courses where individual coaching or instruction is the usual method of instruction.