

**Notification of Merger of the University of Texas at Brownsville in Brownsville, Texas
and the University of Texas Pan American in Edinburg, Texas
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Programs**

Summary:

This report is to inform the Board of a merger of the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) in Brownsville, Texas and the University of Texas Pan American (UTPA) in Edinburg, Texas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Programs subsequent to action by the Texas Legislature in 2013. The two universities will join resources and assets to form the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) in Edinburg, Texas BSN Education Program.

Historical Perspective:

- The shared history of UTB and UTPA began in 1927 when Edinburg College was founded. In 1973, UTPA opened a second campus in Brownsville, which later became an independent institution of the University of Texas System in 1991.
- Over the years, the missions and the identities of UTB and UTPA evolved to serve the communities of the entire Rio Grande Valley. In 2012, the University of Texas System Board of Regents approved the transformational plan to create a new university in South Texas. The Rio Grande Valley, a bicultural region located at the southern tip of Texas on the United States - Mexico border with a population of over 1.14 million people, would be the location of the new university.
- In May 2013, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 24 authorizing the creation of a new university in South Texas that would also include a previously authorized new medical school; in June 2013, Governor Perry signed Senate Bill 24 into law. The new university was established to expand higher education in the region and provide more opportunities for people in the region to access higher education.
- In July 2013, the newly formed university initiated the accreditation process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). In December 2013, the name of the university was finalized to become UTRGV. Formal regional accreditation of UTRGV was granted by SACSCOC in 2015.
- UTRGV plans to enroll the inaugural class of students in Fall 2015. Students currently enrolled at UTB and UTPA will be automatically admitted to UTRGV.
- The UTB BSN Education Program submitted notification to the Board of program closure, effective August 31, 2015. Plans submitted with the notification form delineated assurances that current UTB BSN students will experience a seamless transition to the new UTRGV BSN Education Program without additional hours, costs, or any other negative impact on their education.
- UTRGV will maintain all UTB courses in the UTRGV course inventory until the teach-out of all current UTB students is complete. UTPA, as UTRGV, will maintain an intact curriculum for the BSN program and will continue national nursing accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

- Dr. Carolina Huerta has been appointed to serve as the Director of the UTRGV School of Nursing. Dr. Huerta serves as Chair of the UTPA Department of Nursing and has been with UTPA since 1972.

Staff Recommendation:

This report is for information purposes and no Board vote is required.