

UTRGV Named to U.S. News Most Innovative Schools

UTRGV debuts on U.S. News 2026 Most Innovative Schools, ranks fourth among Texas publics, and No. 1 in Texas for Social Mobility and Least Debt.

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EINPresswire.com/ -- UTRGV debuted on the 2026 [U.S. News & World Report Most Innovative Schools list](#), placing No. 56 overall and No. 28 among public institutions. Only 66 universities earned a spot. The university also posted its best-ever placements in the overall rankings, and again ranked [No. 1 in Texas for Social Mobility and Least Debt](#), milestones that underscore UTRGV's accessibility, momentum, and impact across the Rio Grande Valley.



In a significant milestone, UTRGV has been recognized as one of the Most Innovative Schools in the 2026 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings, marking its first appearance in this category.

For the first time in its 10-year history, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley has been named to the U.S. News & World Report Most Innovative Schools list in the 2026 Best Colleges

“

UTRGV is proud to represent the Rio Grande Valley, and to show that innovation lives here.”

Dr. Guy Bailey

rankings. Only 66 schools earned a place this year, with UTRGV debuting at No. 56 overall and No. 28 among public institutions. In Texas, UTRGV ranked fourth among public universities, behind UT Austin, Texas A&M, and the University of Houston.

According to U.S. News & World Report, the Most Innovative list is derived from surveys of university

presidents and senior officials nationwide who identify institutions they view as leading in innovation.

“This recognition by U.S. News & World Report marks a proud milestone for UTRGV – our first

time on this prestigious list and a clear sign that the nation is paying attention to the transformative work happening here,” UTRGV President Guy Bailey said. “I’m deeply thankful to our students, faculty, staff, and many supporters who made this possible. UTRGV is proud to represent the Rio Grande Valley – and to show that innovation lives here.”

MOMENTUM ACROSS U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKINGS

The U.S. News & World Report rankings 2026 reflect UTRGV’s strongest performance to date:

- No. 213 among all national universities, up 7 spots from last year
- No. 118 among national public universities, up 5 spots from last year
- No. 1 in Texas and No. 27 nationally for Top Performers on Social Mobility
- No. 1 in Texas and No. 10 nationally for Least Debt

UTRGV has advanced significantly over the past decade. In 2016 and 2017, the university was unranked. Today, UTRGV is climbing steadily toward its next objective: breaking into the top 100 public universities in the nation.

“Our rise in the national rankings underscores what we’ve become – a university on the move,” Bailey said. “This progress reflects not only institutional success, but a shared commitment to transforming lives and elevating the entire Rio Grande Valley. The best is yet to come.”

IMPACT FOR THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Placement on the Most Innovative Schools list and leadership in Least Debt and Top Performers on Social Mobility highlight UTRGV’s mission to expand opportunity and reduce barriers for students across South Texas. These outcomes strengthen the region’s talent pipeline and underscore the value of UTRGV’s model of access, affordability, and innovation.

ABOUT UTRGV

[Celebrating its 10th anniversary](#) during the 2025-2026 academic year, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) is on a mission to transform the Rio Grande Valley, the Americas and the world. One of the country’s largest Hispanic-Serving Institutions and Seal of Excelencia certified, UTRGV has earned national recognition for its academic excellence, social mobility and student success since opening in Fall 2015. Ranked among the Best Colleges for your Tuition (and Tax) Dollars in 2025 by Washington Monthly (#7 nationally; #1 in Texas), UTRGV continues to break enrollment records, launch new academic and athletics programs and progress toward achieving R1 research status.

2026 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges Rankings

#213 among all national universities
▲7

#118 among all national public universities
▲5

Most innovative schools

#56 among all national universities

#28 among all national public universities

#4 among all Texas public universities

1. UT Austin
2. Texas A&M
3. Houston
4. **UTRGV**

UTRGV climbs in the 2026 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges, debuting on the Most Innovative Schools list at No. 56 overall and No. 28 public, ranking No. 213 among national universities and No. 118 among national public universities, and No. 4 among

The only university in Texas with schools of Medicine and Podiatric Medicine, UTRGV's regional footprint spans South Texas – with locations, teaching sites, and centers established in Edinburg, Brownsville, Rio Grande City, McAllen, Weslaco, Harlingen, Laredo, Port Isabel and South Padre Island.

Patrick Gonzales

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

+1 956-665-2741

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Top performers on social mobility

#1 among all Texas public universities

#56 among all national universities
▲5

Least debt

#1 among Texas public universities

#10 among all national universities

2026 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges. UTRGV ranks No. 1 in Texas for social mobility and least debt, No. 56 nationally for social mobility, and No. 10 nationally for least debt.

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