

Luis R. Torres-Hostos, PhD

Brief Bio

Luis R. Torres-Hostos, Ph.D., is Founding Dean and Professor of the School of Social Work at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg, TX. He assumed his role on August 1st, 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rapidly integrated into the university, local, and binational communities of the Rio Grande Valley, where he is positioning the School of Social Work to play a key role in promoting health, health equity, and social justice. During his first year, he lead a strategic planning effort that will increase the number of faculty and researchers in the School; expand community-engaged research and scholarship in areas impacting the Rio Grande Valley communities; and strengthen educational initiatives like expanding clinical preparation in the master's program, developing additional specializations, creating a bilingual master's program, and building a doctoral program. Dr. Torres-Hostos' research focuses on health inequities and social determinants of health with a focus on Hispanic and African American communities. He also works on community engagement initiatives aimed at building community resilience. He is currently leading a team of researchers, community partners, and students in an NIH-funded project titled *Community Engagement Strategies for COVID-19 Prevention and Response in Underserved Communities in Hidalgo County*, which is part of the Texas CEAL (Community-Engagement Research Alliance Against COVID-19 in Disproportionately Affected Communities) Consortium (see www.TexasCeal.org). Dr. Torres-Hostos' research and community work have been funded by federal, state, and private entities. He has traveled and worked extensively in Latin America, and has established research collaborations in Mexico, Central America, and Puerto Rico. He serves on the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross South Texas Chapter and is a member of the Rotary Club of Mission. Originally from Puerto Rico, Dr. Torres-Hostos holds a doctorate in clinical psychology from Fordham University in New York City and has over 30 years of clinical, teaching, research, and administrative experience.