



The University of Puerto Rico at Cayey  
2016 Self-Study Report to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

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## **Executive Summary**

The University of Puerto Rico at Cayey (UPR-Cayey), first established in 1967 and formerly known as Cayey University College, is a four-year undergraduate public institution and one of the eleven campuses that comprise the state's public system of higher education.

The University of Puerto Rico (UPR) and the UPR-Cayey went through several historical events since the 2010 Periodic Review Report. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) response to those events was the requirement to submit several monitoring and supplemental reports, especially during 2010-2011. UPR-Cayey provided evidence that satisfied MSCHE concerns as evidenced by the reaffirmation of accreditation in November 2011. Furthermore, several monitoring and supplemental reports have been submitted since 2011, all of which have complied with MSCHE expectations. The requests by the MSCHE have helped the Institution establish the framework for the 2016 Self-Study.

The institutional and societal events that are addressed in this report are as follows: the successful completion of the assessment of the General Education Plan; the accreditation of several academic programs and student services offices; the establishment of a new UPR Governing Board (GB) and a new State Education Certification Agency (CEPR) appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; new policies regarding student graduation requirements and faculty recruitment; an increase in cooperation between UPR-Cayey and the off-campus community; recent UPR and UPR-Cayey administrative transitions; the decrease in the number of UPR-Cayey employees due to employee retirement; the fiscal situation of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and the steady decline in the population of Puerto Rico.

The above events and outcomes guided the UPR-Cayey community to reflect on its past effectiveness, and changes needed in order to continue to excel. The goal of the self-study was an honest, participatory, collaborative reflection and self-assessment tool relating aspects of academic and administrative endeavors.

The report itself has been organized in a six-chapter structure, and has demonstrated that the institution is committed to its ongoing and sustained compliance with the Commission's 14 accreditation standards, as well as with the institution's Mission and Objectives.

## **General Findings and Recommendations**

The 2016 Self-Study laid the foundation for the following institutional assessment results and the upcoming areas of improvement:

1. The Mission and Goals guide all UPR-Cayey academic programs, administrative activities, and planning processes. Its organizational structures respond to its mission and goals with clear lines of organization and authority. The ongoing revision process of the Mission and Goals document should produce an updated document reflecting the UPR-Cayey for the next decade. (Chapter 1)
2. The UPR-Cayey conducts its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves in adherence to ethical standards. The academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and freedom of expression are central to the academic enterprise of UPR-Cayey. (Chapter 1)
3. The UPR-Cayey has a well-defined collegial and participative governance structure, which allows for the prevalence of academic issues within the institutional agenda. Students, faculty and the administrative staff have ample opportunities to participate in leadership and governance at UPR-

Cayey. In some instances, the Institution has included the Administrative Board in the ongoing decision-making process of the institution. (Chapter 2)

4. The human, financial, technical and structural resources at UPR-Cayey are prioritized and aligned according to the mission goals and objectives of the institution. (Chapter 2)
5. The Institution has evidence of the continued assessment of its budget allocation processes during the last five years. The UPR-Cayey will implement an aggressive and continuous assessment of a Risk Assessment Plan in order to quickly respond to expected constraints. (Chapter 3)
6. The Institution possesses a highly qualified faculty and supporting staff in order to accomplish its mission. The Institution provides faculty with opportunities for professional development. The Institution actively supports and provides resources for faculty research. (Chapter 4)
7. The General Education renovation process is being built on a sound, conceptual framework of abilities, contents and methodologies that have resulted from a consensus process over the past years. Course offerings at UPR-Cayey are aligned with the established academic agenda and are directed to incorporate research experiences, community service, interdisciplinary studies and the use of technology. The assessment results showed the need to increase the diversity of students' experiences by promoting the participation of faculty in the design and implementation of new courses. The UPR-Cayey student actively participates in out-of-class activities that complement their undergraduate experiences. (Chapter 4)
8. The UPR-Cayey has established a network of offices and initiatives that provides support to students. Student admission, retention, and graduation rates have remained stable even during the fiscal adjustment of the past years. Additionally, the institution must plan for providing the resources to comply with State laws and institutional certifications that require an increase in admission, retention and graduation rates. (Chapter 5)
9. The Institution is committed to external evaluation and assessment of its academic programs and institutional effectiveness. The Institution assessment plan is mission-driven and allows for periodic evaluation of its effectiveness. In order to effectively plan, the institution must increase the role of the Assessment Officer in the decision-making process of the institution. The officer is accountable for the update, and the sharing of findings of the assessment process. (Chapter 6)

## Overview

The UPR-Cayey, established in 1967 and formerly known as Cayey University College, is a four-year undergraduate institution and one of the eleven campuses that comprise the state's public system of higher education. The UPR-Cayey provides an affordable education to students that live within the central-southwest geographical region of the island. A board of trustees oversees the general functioning of the UPR system without interfering with local governance matters. Its administrative structure consists of a chancellor, deans, associate deans, academic directors and support office directors. It acquired its autonomous status by means of a resolution of the Puerto Rico Commission on Higher Education (PRCHE), and has been accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) since 1975, receiving its most recent reaffirmation of accreditation on November 17, 2011.

In Fall, 2015 enrollment consisted of 3,707 undergraduate students, of which 826 were first-time degree-seeking students and 705 were sophomore students belonging to the 2014 Freshmen Cohort (a retention rate of 90%). The student body is 99% Hispanic, 65% female, and 75% Pell Grant recipients. The average graduation time is about five years.

The Mission and Goals are clearly defined and guide all UPR-Cayey academic programs, administrative activities, and planning processes. Its organizational structures respond to its mission and goals with clear lines of organization and authority.

The Institution is classified as a *Baccalaureate College of Arts & Sciences* by the Carnegie Foundation (2016). To fulfill its mission of a diverse, balanced and interdisciplinary curriculum, the UPR-Cayey offers 27 baccalaureate programs in five academic fields: Teacher Preparation Program (11 baccalaureate programs), Natural Sciences (4 baccalaureate programs), Social Sciences (4 baccalaureate programs), Humanities (4 baccalaureate programs) and Business Administration (4 baccalaureate programs)

The quality and rigor of its academic programs and student support offices are evidenced by several accrediting agencies: The Teacher Preparation Program was accredited by the following: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE/CAEP) and the Standards of Professional Accreditation (SPA), Association for Childhood Education (ACEI), National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE), National Science-Teachers Association (NSTA), Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The Business Administration and Office Technology and Administration Programs are accredited by the *Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs* (ACBSP). The General Library is recognized by the *Association for College and Research Libraries* (ACRL) and The Center for the Interdisciplinary Development of Students (CEDE) is accredited by the *International Association of Counseling Services* (IACS).

To further assess quality, rigor, and relevance within the institution's mission and goals, each academic program goes through a five-year self-study assessment report that includes evaluation of its performance indicators. The Academic Dean, the Academic Senate, and the Administrative Board further assess this academic program self-study report.

Excellence in Science is nationally recognized by inclusion of the UPR-Cayey among the top 51 United States baccalaureate institutions of Hispanic Science and Engineering doctorate recipients (2004-2008), according to the 2011 National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates.

As stated in the UPR-Cayey mission, the institution provides the student with opportunities that emphasizes on interdisciplinary education, research experiences, and community service, as a means to strengthen teaching and learning. The following activities provide opportunities that enrich the academic and cultural life of our students and the community at large; they also reflect the institution's mission of providing holistic learning: The Honors Program, The Upward Bound Program, Research Initiative

Scientific Enhancement Program (RISE), Research Infrastructure for Minority Institutions (RIMI), Howard Hughes Program, The Institute of Interdisciplinary Research (IIR), a first-rate Museum, The Division of Extension and Continuing Education, and International Studies Program, and The office of Cultural Activities

The admission process has resulted in a well-prepared student body of adequate size and composition with a first-time degree retention rate of 85% and a national average graduation rate of 44%. The students' achievements, retention, and graduation rates are not accidental; they are due to effective services provided by a team of qualified professionals.

To support the Institution in achieving its mission, the UPR-Cayey has a highly qualified professional staff of 211 full-time faculty members, including teaching and non-teaching faculty (i.e., Researchers, Librarians, Psychologists and Counselors). The faculty is highly experienced and qualified, many with doctoral degrees from some of the most prestigious institutions in the world. The cultural diversity of the faculty is also strong; professors from India, France, Germany, Spain, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, and the mainland United States, among other countries. Their diverse qualifications reflect the interdisciplinary nature of teaching, research, creative projects, and services in the UPR-Cayey.

The faculty has a strong commitment to professional development and scholarly activities to carry on with the academic agenda. For the continued professional growth of its faculty, the UPR-Cayey sponsors four *Professional Development Days* every academic year (two per semester) – the only higher education institution in Puerto Rico that has established this practice. To round out the composition of our university community, 345 non-instructional staff provides support to fulfill the mission and goals of our institution.

### **Self-Study Process**

The MSCHE Self Study Steering Committee (SSC) was established in March 2014 and included faculty and staff members that met the recommendations in figure 6, MSCHE Handbook on Self-Study, Second Edition. Students were also included in the SSC and were selected by the UPR-Cayey Student Council. The Chancellor nominated all other members, although anyone interested in the community was able to join the SSC.

The Self-Study Design was submitted to the MSCHE in June 2014, followed by the site visit of the MSCHE Vice-President, Tito Guerrero. The final revised document was sent to MSCHE, July 2014.

MSCHE Standards of Excellence were grouped as follows:

Chapter 1: Institutional Identity: Mission and Goals and Integrity (Standard 1 and 6)

Chapter 2: Organizational Structure: Leadership and governance and administration (Standard 4 and 5)

Chapter 3: Planning for Institutional Renewal: Planning, Resources allocation and Institutional Renewal, and Institutional Resources Administration (Standard 2 and 3)

Chapter 4: The Academic Experience: Faculty, Educational Offering, General Education, and Related Educational Activities (Standard 10, 11, 12 and 13)

Chapter 5: Student Life: Student Admission and Retention, and Student Support Services. (Standard 8 and 9)

Chapter 6: Continued Improvement: Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning (Standard 7 and 14)



## **Changes to the Self-Study Design Plan**

Originally, the Self Study was due in Spring 2015. The date was later changed by the MSCHE, allowing UPR-Cayey more time to evaluate and discuss the original draft. New groups were created for this purpose as well as including editors who contributed to the narrative. The current draft is a reflection of this process.

## **Current Events in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico**

According to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Planning Board figures, the global recession began impacting the Island's economy in 2006. As a result, government appropriations have steadily declined. This, coupled with a reduced island population, produces an approximate 14 percent reduction in tax revenues, which further aggravates the central government's deficit. The government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has issued several budget reforms that are expected to stabilize revenues in the next five years 2016 to 2020. Consequently, the UPR and UPR-Cayey budgets have reflected and will reflect a decline in state funds allocation during the coming years.

Budget reductions are not unique to the University of Puerto Rico system. Many state universities across the U.S. are currently facing the following: declining state subsidies for public higher education and limited ability to maintain increases in tuition and fees, which have risen over the last decade faster than the median family income.

Similarly, a report issued by State Higher Education Executive Officers concludes that state and local appropriations have been decreasing while enrollment and education costs have increased based on the Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA) and the combined effects of inflation and enrollment growth have reduced state and local government support for higher education.

The synergetic effect of the MSCHE and the UPR-Cayey planning, budgeting and assessment processes have allowed us to establish institutional priorities and the necessary adjustments to successfully carry out our Institution's mission and goals. Looking into the future, the UPR-Cayey will implement an aggressive and continuous risk- assessment plan in order to quickly respond to foreseen change

## CHAPTER 1: INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

Standard 1: Mission and Goals – The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates whom the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are utilized to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

### Standard 6: Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

### Introduction

The University of Puerto Rico at Cayey is committed to a well-rounded education of excellence through undergraduate programs in the preparation of teachers, and in the disciplines of Natural and Social Sciences, Humanities and Business Administration. It encompasses a unified vision of knowledge in which general education and professional specialization are viewed as complementary experiences in the formation of human beings. It offers an interdisciplinary and innovative education that integrates topics and experiences from various fields of knowledge, research and community service as part of the teaching and learning process, keeping in perspective the value of specialization. A global perspective is embraced all the while recognizing the individual’s contribution to their community. These values support the guiding mission and goals and promote the institution’s commitment to the highest possible ethics in university life.

This chapter evaluates the institution’s mission and goals, while promoting integrity in all its endeavors.

### A brief history of the Mission and Goals Statement

In 1967, the UPR Governing Board created the *Colegio Regional de Cayey*. Its initial Mission was described in Certification 57a (1979-1980) of the Council on Higher Education (Exhibit 1). In 1982, the Council granted Cayey fiscal autonomy and changed the institution’s name to *Colegio Universitario de Cayey* (Exhibit 2), and in 1993, the UPR-Cayey Academic Senate approved a new Mission, Goals and Objectives Statement (Exhibit 3). By 1999, the institution became the *Universidad de Puerto Rico en Cayey* by mandate of the Board of Trustees (BT Certification 103, 1999-2000, Exhibit 4). In 2006, after extensive revision, discussion and analysis from all sectors of the community, the Academic Senate approved the current Mission and Goals Statement (AS Certification 89, 2005-2006, Appendix 1.1).

### MISSION AND GOALS

The Mission and Goals Statement is prominently present in institutional life, as it guides both long-term planning and daily academic and administrative decisions. Hard copies are displayed in numerous academic buildings and deanships, and it is available on the institutional webpage (<http://www.cayey.upr.edu>).

The preamble of the mission celebrates the natural beauty and serenity of the campus as a nurturing environment for study and reflection, as well as for the development of human values. The mission statement then conveys the institution’s commitment to the formation of well-rounded individuals through

an interdisciplinary and innovative education that integrates subjects and experiences in the fields of knowledge, research, creation, and community service.

The mission of the UPR-Cayey stems from its commitment to the fundamental values of the institution and from the mission of the University of Puerto Rico as a public institution of higher education. The mission statement itemizes general objectives that emanate from its four institutional goals (as shown in Exhibit 3) resulting in a faculty with varied academic backgrounds providing a rich and diverse educational experience. This coupled with the natural beauty of UPR-Cayey's surroundings and its central location, the campus provides a friendly, and peaceful academic environment, which invites scholarship, reflection, and personal development.

**Relevance of Mission and Goals on institutional planning and development.** The Mission and Goals Statement has been the compass for the institution's development and strategic planning, as it constitutes a cohesive set of aims that portray and guide the University's position in the community, the region it serves, and the Nation. Governing bodies of the UPR-Cayey have used these goals and objectives as guidelines to develop plans and budgets, create and update programs and practices, and evaluate institutional effectiveness (AS Certification 51, 2002-2003, Appendix 1.2). It is, in fact the basis for the development of the ten-year strategic plan that was also approved and implemented a decade ago, as a commitment to the Mission's enforcement (AS Certification 16, 2006-07, Exhibit 5). The Strategic Plan comprises ten key areas, each of which is aligned with the Mission's goals as shown in Figure 1.1 below:

Figure 1.1 UPR-Cayey Campus- 2006-2016 Strategic Plan and Institutional Goals Alignment

	Strategic Plan Key Areas	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
I	Sustained Ties to Students	✓	✓		✓
II	Current Academic Curriculum of Experimentation and Renewal	✓		✓	✓
III	Research and Creative Work	✓		✓	
IV	Planning, Evaluation and Assessment	✓	✓		
V	Technological Enhancement	✓	✓		
VI	Leadership in the Community and Cultural Initiatives	✓		✓	✓
VII	Internationalization	✓	✓	✓	✓
VIII	Efficiency and Beauty in Natural and Built Spaces	✓	✓		✓
IX	Administrative and Managerial Optimization		✓		
X	Strengthened Institutional Identity		✓	✓	

The Mission and Goals Statement establishes four core institutional goals:

1. To provide an undergraduate education of excellence.
2. To cultivate in all sectors of the university's community a commitment to excellence to the UPR-Cayey's academic mission, thus promoting a unified institutional purpose.
3. To make the UPR-Cayey one of the primary centers of academic and cultural activity in Puerto Rico.
4. To foster a sense of social responsibility based on respect for human beings and their natural environment.

Each institutional goal and its objectives are implemented through institutional programs, practices, initiatives and policies.

Goal 1. To provide an undergraduate education of excellence.

This goal promotes a diverse, innovative and interdisciplinary curriculum. The UPR-Cayey curriculum consists of 27 academic programs in Natural and Social Sciences, Education, Business Administration, and Humanities. The quality and rigor of its academic programs are evidenced by several accrediting agencies, as shown in Appendix 1.3.

Excellence in Science is also nationally recognized by the inclusion of the UPR-Cayey among the top 51 United States baccalaureate institutions of Hispanic Science and Engineering doctorate recipients (2004-2008), according to the 2011 National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates (Exhibit 6).

To further assess quality, rigor, and relevance within the institution's Mission and Goals, each academic program goes through a five-year self-study assessment report that includes evaluation of its performance indicators (Exhibit 7). The Academic Dean, the Academic Senate, and the Administrative Board further assess the program's self-study reports (Exhibit 8). (For further information about program assessments, see Chapter 6).

These diverse academic disciplines in turn coalesce into the General Education component, one of the hallmarks of the institution, designed to fulfill yet another fundamental objective of goal #1: to provide students with a vision of the interrelation between general education, degree specialty and the environment. The UPR-Cayey is the only unit of the UPR that includes as part of its internal bylaws an institutional General Education Committee with members appointed by the faculty, several certifications that assure the quality and rigor of the curriculum, a continued assessment plan, an organizational chart that identifies roles and responsibilities, and defined goals and measurable objectives of the General Education component. In 2001, the Academic Senate approved a milestone document that has withstood the test of time: *Abilities and Contents of the General Education Component at the UPR-Cayey* (AS Certification 18, 2001-02, Exhibit 9). The document provided the framework for the interrelation between General Education and academic curricula at the UPR-Cayey, and for the approval of the *New Model for General Education at the UPR-Cayey Campus* (AS Certification 21, 2007-08, Exhibit 10). The model and its fundamental documents established specific learning outcomes, skills, and abilities that are to be developed by all students, which will be further discussed in Chapter 6. The General Education first five-year plan was successfully completed and assessed in 2014-15. Among other findings, the assessment report recommended renaming the new model (mentioned above) as: *Interdisciplinary Model for General Education at UPR-Cayey* (AS Certification 15, 2015-16, Exhibit 11), further emphasizing the model's commitment to an interdisciplinary curriculum. The General Education Model will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

The goal's aim is to provide "academic, research, exchange, creation, training, professional practice and service experiences" has also been thoroughly implemented. The UPR-Cayey Campus is the only unit of the system that mandates that all graduates participate in at least one research, creative or community service experience (AS Certification 49, 2002-03 Exhibit 12.). All academic programs are required to assess their course syllabi for evidence of their curriculums' contributions to this initiative. Programs such as the *Interdisciplinary Research Institute* (III), the *Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement* (RISE), the *Honors Program*, and the *Howard Hughes Medical Institute* (HHI, Exhibit 13), further support this academic requirement.

The *National Institute of Health* (NIH) awarded UPR-Cayey the 2015-2020 *Biomedical/Biobehavioral Research Administration Development* (BRAD) grant, which is aligned with the mission of the UPR-Cayey of promoting and fostering research as an interdisciplinary experience (Exhibit 14). Together with the *Building Research Infrastructure and Capacity* (BRIC), managed by the III, these grants promote and foster interdisciplinary research in social, environmental, and biomedical health issues, providing not only

students, but faculty and staff, with training and experience opportunities, as well as tools for successful admission in graduate programs, and/or application for external grants.

The emergence of multiple new interdisciplinary courses and seminars also evidence the institution's commitment to research opportunities for students. Courses such as *Interdisciplinary Research Experiences for Students* (INTD 4116) provide students with undergraduate experiences in interdisciplinary research while gaining credit hours towards graduation requirements. During the fall semester of 2015, 111 students were enrolled in the course. *Special Topics in Interdisciplinary Research* (INTD 4996) allows students to participate in research on community health, geographic data, and the environment, among other topics. *Environmental Changes in Puerto Rico* (INTD 3027) and *Bioethics* (BIOL 4997) are also intended to provide an undergraduate experience in research. Students from all academic fields are currently participating in research at the UPR-Cayey. Out of 274 participants in these experiences during 2014-2015, 107 (39%) are majoring in Natural Sciences, 100 (36%) are majoring in Social Sciences, 62 (23%) are professional school majors and 5 (2%) are from other fields of study. The impact on students' academic graduate prospects has been significant. From 2004 to 2015, 231 out of 291 students that participated in undergraduate research programs applied to graduate school. Of the 231 that applied, 200 (85%) were admitted (Exhibit 15). Other related activities, as evidenced in Chapter 5, such as the band, choir, student organizations, and community related associations serve to round out an undergraduate education of excellence. As a member (since 1973) of the Interuniversity Athletic League (LAI), the institution is also committed to an athletics program (Exhibit 16).

Finally, to implement the goal's objective of offering an innovative education through technology, the UPR-Cayey successfully participated in the *2015-2020 Department of Education Title V: Developing Hispanic Serving Institution [HSI] Program Grant Competition*. The plan includes four initiatives, one of which is the creation of 25 new online courses within the next five years. The institution's expected goal is to impact regional, country and statewide students in the context of the diverse and rapidly changing island demographics (Exhibit 17), as it is further explained in Chapter 5.

## Goal 2. Campus commitment to performance excellence

The second goal emerges from the Mission's principle that education is a way of life, and that all members of the institution's community are, essentially, both learners and potential teachers. The goal thus promotes continuous professional development and retraining (continuing education) of all constituencies. In compliance with one of its specific objectives, the Academic Senate approved a comprehensive *Plan for the Faculty's Professional Development* that mandates four *Professional Development Days* of seminars and workshops every academic year (two per semester) – the only higher education institution in Puerto Rico that has established this practice (Exhibits 18 and 19). Also, the UPR-Cayey allocates a special budget for its faculty's participation in conferences and workshops in their fields. Academic departments are required to gather information each year on its faculty professional development needs, and to refer such requests to the Dean of Academic Affairs, in compliance with the goal's objective to distribute budget according to institutional priorities (Exhibit 20). In addition, the *Institutional Fund for Research Development* (FIDI) yearly grants financial support for faculty's research and publication projects (Exhibit 21). In spite of financial struggles, the UPR-Cayey has managed to continue granting sabbatical licenses for research and writing. Further discussion is available in Chapter 4.

The *Programa de Ayuda al Empleado* (Employee Support Program) also offers psychological support and guidance to all employees in the areas of work, physical, financial and emotional health (Exhibit 22).

Students' support services include initiatives such as the *Center for Student Support* (CAE), which coordinates tutoring among peers (Exhibit 23). In addition, through the *Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies* (DECEP), the institution offers non-credit preparatory summer courses to help new students who show a lack of basic skills in the areas of Math, English and Spanish to develop these. Other student support services such as the federally funded *Student Support Services* (TRIO-SSS) and

*Upward Bound Programs* are meant to assist students with basic college requirements and encourage them to complete their education and attain their personal and vocational goals, by offering academic tutoring, assistance in completing financial aid applications and academic counseling, among other services. The Dean of Student Affairs also encourages and provides support to student organizations to further strengthen students' leadership skills and social responsibility commitment (Exhibits 24 and 25) as is explained in Chapter 5.

Continued monitoring of the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process is not only enforced through the annual compilation of assessment outcome surveys conducted by the *General Education Committee*, but through seminars and workshops on the topic of educational assessment that have been, and continue to be, provided for faculty members. In addition, the UPR Governing Board mandates the periodic evaluation of all academic programs through AS Certification 43, 2006-2007 (Exhibit 8).

The UPR-Cayey's commitment to agility and flexibility in academic and administrative processes, also embodied in this goal, has taken shape in the advancement of documents digitization policies and practices, as well as online enrollment processes.

### Goal 3. Campus as a primary center of academic and cultural activities

The UPR-Cayey and its *Institute of Interdisciplinary Research* maintain strong links with academic and cultural institutions to promote exchange at a national and international level. The *Faculty Resource Network* (FRN) of New York University, *The Leadership Alliance*, and the *Fulbright U.S. Student Program* are some examples. The FRN provides professional development experiences to faculty members in Puerto Rico and in the various other states and countries where they hold training institutes. Through *The Leadership Alliance*, the University encourages students to participate in undergraduate internships; the alliance also provides mentoring, graduate support, faculty development opportunities and research exchanges. The university also stimulates students to apply to the *Fulbright U.S. Student Program*, which offers research, study and teaching opportunities in over 140 countries to recent graduates and graduate students. The UPR-Cayey has also hosted several national conferences, such as the Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico's *Population Studies Conference*, held in November 2013 (Exhibit 26), and the pre-event of the 2015 International Annual Meeting of the *Red de Actividad Física de las Américas* (RAPAFANA) (Exhibit 27). Also, and for more than 25 years, until 2012 the national *University Symposium on Sexual Education* (SUSSEX) was held on campus. This professional conference provided a much-needed space for discussion and exchange in the fields of sexual education and gender issues (Exhibit 28). In addition, the UPR-Cayey is affiliated with the US Census Bureau through its *Center for Census Information* (CIC), a program of the III that gathers demographics and provides consulting services to develop population-based studies; the university is also a member of the *Network of Affiliated Organizations to the State Data Center* (SDC) of Puerto Rico, through the Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico. Together, these alliances empower community members and the general public, with reliable and accurate information produced by the U. S. Census Bureau (Exhibit 29).

Academic departments, as well as institutes and programs such as the III, Pro-Women, General Education, RISE, and the Honors Program, all offer annual colloquiums, seminars, and workshops. The faculty at UPR-Cayey also keeps the institution at the vanguard of academic fields by participating in national and international conferences. These aspects of the institution's endeavors will be evidenced in Chapter 4.

By mandate of the Board of Trustees, beginning in the year 2000 the UPR-Cayey and all units of the UPR created a *Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies* (DECEP) (Exhibit 30). Its mission in Cayey is to make viable, guarantee and perpetuate the institution's commitment to service and long ties to students, its insertion into the current globalization of education, and its contributions to socio-economic and cultural development, by addressing the immediate needs of the sectors it serves (Exhibit 31). To deliver its mission, DECEP satisfies the needs of the community for short courses and

professional certifications, such as personal trainer, sign language interpreter, college testing reviews, and many others (Exhibit 32).

Faculty and staff's development is also supported through continuing education in Ethics, as mandated by the *Office of Government Ethics*. Emerging policies, such as the Human Resources Office's instruction that all university personnel must participate in at least six hours of continued education activities per fiscal year, further advance the goal (Exhibit 33).

Plenty of activities are developed to provide artistic, scientific, and professional experiences that complement academic programs and serve the community. The Master Lecture is a solemn ceremony celebrated at the beginning of each academic year, whereby the UPR-Cayey invites a distinguished specialist in a relevant field to deliver a speech to both the internal and external community (Exhibit 34). The UPR-Cayey also has a first-class museum, the Dr. Pío López Martínez Museum, which holds permanent and temporary exhibitions and is available to the general public, free of charge. Its mission is to be a center of education, creation and dissemination of the arts, in particular Puerto Rican art and the work of artist Ramón Frade, a Cayey native (Exhibit 35). Also, the *Office of Cultural Activities* establishes a link between the institution and the greater area of Cayey by offering a wide and varied program of cultural, athletic and professional extracurricular activities to supplement the academic training of students (Exhibit 36). The UPR-Cayey is also engaged in developing students' artistic interests. The *Literary Circle* of the Hispanic Studies Department gathers students who are (or wish to become) writers in order to provide them with tools for the betterment of their work, as well as an annual magazine in which to start their publishing careers: *Tinta Nueva* (Exhibit 37). Annual literary contests, theater groups, workshops and theatrical structures (such as the *Casa de Histriones*) also are meant to stimulate and reward student's creativity.

To satisfy its goal to disseminate Puerto Rican culture, the UPR-Cayey has two refereed journals that publish articles on social, cultural, literary and artistic subjects on Puerto Rico or Puerto Ricans. These magazines are *Cayey* and *Identities*. There are also literary and non-refereed scientific journals that address the issues outlined above, such as *Kalos* (journal of the Honor Studies Program,(Exhibit 38), *New Acquisitions Bulletin* (published by the Department of Development of Library Collections,(Exhibit 39), *Cayey Students Write* (a thematic creative newsletter in electronic form since 2011, hosted by the English Department's student organization: Sigma Tau Delta, International English Honor Society), and *Epoje* (Humanities Department).

Among many other activities designed to develop knowledge in the community, the Victor M. Pons Library fulfills its mission to educate and actively participate in the process of teaching and learning at the UPR in Cayey. It promotes the integration, interpretation and critical management of educational resources and information technology. The *Antonio Martorell Documentary Archive* (ADAM) documents the works and materials of renowned Puerto Rican artist Antonio Martorell, in order to allow scholars and the general public to study and interpret the documents therein preserved in order to disseminate general knowledge and analysis of his work (Exhibit 40). Several additional initiatives designed to extend education beyond the institution's gates are discussed under Goal 4, below.

#### Goal 4. Social responsibility

Numerous initiatives support the achievement of the UPR-Cayey's commitment to social responsibility. Service learning experiences for students have multiplied in recent years through the efforts of academic departments, institutional programs such as the *Institute for Interdisciplinary Research*, and the UPR system's policies. The *University Collective for the Access to the UPR- Cayey* (CUA) is a systemic program that promotes research and outreach activities that address the relationship between poverty and access to the University of Puerto Rico, and the UPR-Cayey recruits its students as a vital component of this service. The project, which began in September 2014, is carried out in six (6) UPR units (Exhibit 41). Additional discussion is available in Chapter 5. The UPR-Cayey has also hosted in its campus programs fully dedicated to community service. The *Iniciativa Comunitaria* program allowed

hundreds of students of the UPR-Cayey to aid in health care efforts and educational activities for the eradication and prevention of drug abuse, AIDS, and homelessness (Exhibit 42). Until 2014, the UPR-Cayey also harbored the *Institute for the Research and Development of Gifted Children* (IIDED), which provided services to that population and allowed undergraduate students to participate in service learning (Exhibit 43).

The DECEP, which provides useful continuing education courses to the internal and external communities, also offers training programs to meet the needs of nearby private industries and government agencies. Departmental initiatives include the *Project for the Integration of New Students to Hispanic Studies* (PIEH), which during the 2014-15 academic year offered free academic and literary workshops to dozens of high school students from the greater area of Cayey, with the purpose of raising their creative and academic interests in the areas of Literature and Linguistics (Exhibit 44). The *Pro-Women* program focuses on advancing and promoting the rights of women through education, research and community service. This is achieved through conferences, seminars, research symposia and support for faculty who want to include gender studies in their curricula, thus strengthening students' appreciation and respect towards contributions by a diverse group of people (Exhibit 45). In addition, the UPR-Cayey recently founded *Casa Universidad* (University House), a donated building in the center of Cayey (Certification 18 (2006-07) BT) with which the institution aims to increase its off-campus role, as well as students' awareness of external community needs. The house provides a combination of offerings ranging from workshops on nutrition, home gardening, meditation and massage, to literacy. (Exhibits 47 and 48). In accordance with that purpose, in 2012 the Chancellor also signed a Collaboration Agreement with the municipality of Cayey, in order to strengthen bonds between the UPR-Cayey and its surroundings through the mutual support of community and university projects (including the construction of soccer fields) as well as to support the city's strategic plan "Cayey, Green City" (Exhibit 49). In 2014, the Chancellor signed another agreement with the city for the joint maintenance and use of the running track (Exhibit 50). Access to the gym, track and soccer fields is granted to members of the greater community of Cayey, and several other collaborative agreements with emerging cooperatives, government agencies and third sector entities also emanate from the institution's commitment to social responsibility. The UPR-Cayey is also pledged to the fight against cancer, and every year, along with the American Cancer Society carries out charity events on its campus (Exhibit 51). The Victor M. Pons Library also maintains an *Information Center of Philanthropic Funds* that connects charitable foundations to organizations and individuals interested in philanthropic activity (Exhibit 52).

Environmental conservation and enhancement has also been a priority of the UPR-Cayey since its foundation, as its beautifully preserved natural grounds bear witness to. In addition to its recycling program (Exhibit 53), since 2012 the UPR-Cayey has been holding agricultural fairs ("Mercados Agrícolas") at the *Green Shadows Park*, an educational project located behind the gym, whereby the UPR-Cayey provides environmental education to its students and the general public through several monthly activities and agricultural markets (Exhibit 54).

## INTEGRITY

***Institutional Leadership.*** The UPR-Cayey is a fundamental part of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico's higher education system. As such, the Institution is committed to provide quality education at an affordable price to the region, Puerto Rico, and the world. The responsibility of the UPR-Cayey is stated in its mission: "The University is committed for turning words into actions" (Mission and Goals Statement, 2006). Accordingly, the Institution is confident that it has been able to fulfill its responsibility to comply with the MSCHE standards of excellence, as well as with the expectations of the students, their parents, and Puerto Rico. A goal of the UPR-Cayey's mission is to foster justice and honor in the search for conflict resolution in the community. This ethical and moral concept, as describe in chapter 2, is constantly monitored at all levels of the shared government, and within the community at large by the Institutional Discipline Board, the Student Ombudsman Office, the Research Integrity Officer and the discipline committees established by the employee unions; they all participate in the resolution, in a timely manner, of ethical grievances related to academic, research, and administrative misconduct (Students



Bylaws Article 6.8, Certification No. 32, 2005-2006, Exhibit 54) of the BT 42 CFR 50 subpart A). The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Governmental Ethics Office also constantly monitors the institution to verify its compliance with stringent procedure and protocols that ensure an ethical administration of the UPR-Cayey (Comptroller, Internal Audits). Recent and past evaluations have shown that the UPR-Cayey has complied with each of the parameters defined by law. (Audited reports are available for review). An assessment of these is discussed in Chapter 6.

**Non-Faculty, Faculty, and Student Policies.** The UPR-Cayey webpage contains the policies and procedures related to self-conduct, ethics, and the procedures to handle complaints and grievances within the Institution (BT Certification 45, 2006-2007, Exhibit 55 and BT Certification 32, 2005-2006, Exhibit 56). The Office of Human Resources, by electronic means, promotes and disseminates information on how to locate the Institutional policies and the updating of such policies (Form F-96-3.2-9, Appendix 1.4). Additionally, faculty, student and labor-agreement documents with employee unions, stress on ethics and integrity in this Institution. (Collective Bargaining Agreement Workers Union 2014-2017, Exhibit 57, Collective Bargaining Agreement HEEND 2014-2017, Exhibit 58). All documents are available for public scrutiny. (<http://cayey.upr.edu/politiclas-institucionales/>)

The importance of integrity in all government endeavors is evidenced by the establishment of the Office of Governmental Ethics in July 24, 1985 as amended by Law Number 1, 2012. The fundamental mission of the Office of Governmental Ethics (OGE) is to promote and preserve integrity among government employees. By doing so, the office fosters strengthens and monitors the process of developing and promoting an ethical culture of excellence that each public servant should strive for. In order to accomplish its mission, each governmental employee is required to accumulate 20 hours of continued education related to integrity and ethics during a two-year period (Law Number 1, 2012, Exhibit 59).

The Institutional Ethics Committee at the UPR in Cayey is responsible for organizing and promoting seminars and workshops in order to comply with the Law. The committee is comprised by the following members: the Director of Human Resources, Finance, and Security Offices, a member of the Technology office, and a faculty and a non-faculty member elected by the university's community. Each year the committee proposes a work plan and at the end of the year, generates a report to the OGE (see Chapter 3). The Institution is currently in the 2014-2016 cycle.

**Academic Freedom.** Academic freedom is consistent with the institution's Mission and Goals. As stated in the mission: The academic project of the UPR-Cayey requires a University awareness of current issues, such as the improvement of the natural and social environments and the promotion of peace, and commitment to reason overcoming prejudice and respect for dissent. As faculty-administrator, the Institution's leadership fully supports academic freedom as demonstrated by some of the professional development activities about academic freedom, hosted by the Deanship of Academic Affairs (General Bylaws Articles 9,10, 11 y 32 Exhibit 54).

**Academic Integrity.** The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (BT Certification 13, 2009-2010, Exhibit 60) states that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: fraudulent simulations; copying the whole or part of the academic work of another person; copying all or part of another person's answers to the questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling and facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. The University policy for academic integrity is also published in syllabi distributed to students. Any of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary procedures established by the UPR Students General Bylaws.

**Research Integrity.** Research integrity is of utmost importance in order to promote a climate of academic inquiry with a sound ethical basis. This is of particular importance due to the increase in research projects conducted by faculty members and plans to expand undergraduate research as part of the curriculum renovation process.

The institution's Research Misconduct Committee operates under the guidelines of the *Office of Research Integrity* (ORI) of the *Office of Public Health and Science* (OPHS) within the *Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services*. This committee is composed of four faculty members elected by the Academic Senate, the director of the External Resources Office and the Academic Dean (42 CFR 50 subpart A, Exhibit 61). At the beginning of each academic year, the Chancellor informs the community of its members and the relevance of their duties. The committee is responsible for monitoring institutional research projects implementing both the local and the systemic policies for handling research misconduct claims and foreseeing all regulatory activities. The Committee meets at least once every semester or whenever needed. No misconduct procedures have been carried out in the Institution in the last five years.

The UPR-Cayey also has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) (IRB 00004406, FWA00007679) to oversee all proposals that require human subjects for research purposes. The IRB complies with all the rules and regulations of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (Office for Human Research Protections-OHRP, 45 CFR 46, Exhibit 62). This Board has six members, including a representative of the external community. Both faculty and student research projects are subject to evaluation in this board.

**Student Grievances.** The Student Ombudsman is responsible for resolving in a timely matter grievances related to student-faculty, student-non-faculty and student-institution. The main goal is to solve the grievance through a variety of formal and informal channels. A procedure to handle student grievances is described in the BG Certification 119, 2014-15, Exhibit 63. The certification complies with the MSCHE Requirement of Affiliation and Federal Title IV Requirement Certification Statement, specifically in reference to how the institution expeditiously handles complaints within the Institution. Currently, the Internal Student Regulations Handbook is under review to define and clarify students' grievances protocol. (<http://portalwww.cayey.upr.edu/main/paginas/reglamento-estudiantes-upr-cayey>). Complaints related to specific administrative areas such as financial aid or other student support services are handled directly by the corresponding office director. The Dean of Student Affairs acts as an appeals agent when students are not satisfied with corrective actions taken.

Data collected in the past have indicated that the primary student complaint has to do with grades and scheduling of tests (Student Ombudsman Annual Report, Appendix 1.5). The Institution also has other committees that deal with grievances; the Discipline Board and the Misconduct Investigation Committee. The members of the Discipline Board are elected as follows: two are chosen by the Academic Senate, one is named by the Chancellor, and two are named by the Student Council (Academic Senate Bylaws, Exhibit 64).

Also, student organizations in order to be certified by the institution are required to present, a statement on how their particular chapter will proceed in case of a code of ethics violation. Finally, all grievances and complaints are handled with strict confidentiality.

***UPR-Cayey Grievances Policies.***

Faculty and non-faculty complaints are handled according to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Law 426, November 7, 2000 and the Bylaws of the University of Puerto Rico. (Exhibit 65) Disciplinary actions, when needed, are handled following the applicable bylaws and collective bargaining agreements. (Article 35 General Bylaws, Article 21 Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Workers Union 2014-2017, Article 105, 121 Collective Bargaining Agreements HEEND 2014-2017 Exhibits 57 and 58) Grievances about improper use of property and funds are informed anonymously by phone (787) 754-3030, ext. 1106 or toll-free number 1-(877) 771-3133. Grievances can also be informed by email, [Querellas@ocpr.gov.pr](mailto:Querellas@ocpr.gov.pr) or webpage, [www.ocpr.gov.pr](http://www.ocpr.gov.pr)

As in all complaints coming from any of the campus constituents, the Chancellor handles any appeal or reconsideration of actions or decisions taken at the deanship level (See UPR General Bylaws, Exhibit 65). The UPR's President and the Board of Governors will also consider appeals that cannot be resolved

locally. On the other hand, complaints related to academic issues are to be handled first by the faculty involved, leaving the Academic Dean and the Chancellor for subsequent appeal steps.

Also, student organizations in order to be certified by the institution are required to present, a statement on how their particular chapter will proceed in case of a code of ethics violation. Finally, all grievances and complaints are handled with strict confidentiality.

**Disclosure.** The UPR-Cayey fosters respect among the community members throughout the diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives following the institutional policy on this matter. (Anti-Discrimination Policy of the UPR, Exhibit 66).

**UPR-Cayey Catalog.** The UPR-Cayey Catalog is available online and it is updated periodically. ([http://cayey.upr.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2016/09/Cat%C3%A1Logo-2015-16-UPR-CAYEY\\_rev.pdf](http://cayey.upr.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2016/09/Cat%C3%A1Logo-2015-16-UPR-CAYEY_rev.pdf)) Curriculum courses and electives are listed in the catalog allowing the student to plan, with their faculty advisor, their course load in order to achieve graduation within the allotted program requirements.

**Integrity Evidenced as an Employer.** It is a policy of the UPR-Cayey to provide equal opportunity in all areas of education, hiring, and continued employment regardless of sex, race, marital status, creed, age, national origin, sexual orientation, the presence of any physical challenging disability, veteran status or religious preference. (Affirmative Action Policy Exhibit 67, Certification 58 from the Board of Trustees, 2004-2005, Exhibit 66, General Bylaws of the UPR Article 31 Exhibit 65). In addition, it is committed to maintain Affirmative Action policies, through which, specific additional efforts are made to recruit, hire, and promote employees from backgrounds that have been traditionally underrepresented. These efforts apply to all levels of the institution. The policies are available on the website. (Affirmative Action Policy, Certification 58 of the Board of Trustees, 2004-2005, General Bylaws of the UPR Articles 29, 31, 43 y 75)

Recruitment policies and procedures for faculty are based solely on a merit basis and under strict non-discrimination criteria. This rigorous process that includes, the departmental need assessment, the presentation to the Academic Dean of the Department decision, the announcement of the position on the institutional website, in peer-reviewed journals, and local newspapers, the evaluation of the candidates, followed by recommendations for the hiring of faculty which are made, in first instance, by the corresponding Personnel Committees and endorsed by the Academic Dean and the Chancellor. (General Bylaws Article 43, AS Certification 24, 2015-2016, Exhibits 65 and 68). The tenure track process is a five-year evaluation procedure following the established procedures approved by the academic senate. (AS Certification 48, 2015-2016, Exhibit 69).

For non-instructional staff there are very detailed descriptions of the hiring procedures and criteria that are described and detailed in the collective bargaining agreements and General Bylaws (Art. 75, Exhibit 65). The recruitment of personnel is widely disseminated via web-based mechanisms, through the Human Resources Office and also in newspapers of general circulation. The published announcement includes the selection criteria that clearly describe the qualifications, knowledge, skills, abilities and experience required for the positions. All employees receive a copy of the UPR policies and regulations at the initial recruitment stage. (General Bylaws Article 75-85, Exhibit 65, Article 5 Collective Bargaining Agreement Worker's Union 2014-2017, Exhibit 57, Article 3 Collective Bargaining Agreements HEEND 2014-2017, Exhibit 58, Form F-96-3.2-9, Appendix 1.4)

## Findings

1. The UPR- Cayey has a unique model within the UPR based on four core institutional goals. This model includes: A diverse curriculum, research, creativity, community service, and the General Education abilities and content components. The four initiatives are aligned with the diverse and interdisciplinary approaches to education at the UPR-Cayey.

2. The UPR-Cayey complies with ethical standards set by the UPR and other external agencies. The UPR-Cayey is constantly monitored by internal (UPR) and external agencies. The evidence provided indicates a highly regulated system, at all levels, that failsafe the Institution from non-ethical activities.
3. In addition, in 2015 the UPR-Cayey was commended by the Office of the Comptroller of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for exceeding expectations in its compliance with best practices against corruption. (See Appendix 1.6)

## **NEXT STEPS**

As a result of the self-study and in keeping with the institutional identity, mission, goals and integrity, the UPR-Cayey will:

1. Continue to review its Mission and Goals as part of the decennial strategic plan and as per the Academic Senate's recommendation.
2. Review the 2006 Mission and Goals Statement, by the institutional Planning and Assessment Committee, which is currently schedule to deliver its recommendations to the Academic Senate for further discussion, evaluation and certification during the 2017-18 academic year.
3. Align the strategic planning to the UPR 2016-2021 Strategic Plan to be implemented during the 2016-2021 academic year by Central Administration.
4. Strive to maintain excellence in integrity in academic, research, and administrative practices.

## CHAPTER 2: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance – The institution’s system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to ensure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

Standard 5: Administration – The institution’s administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution’s organization and governance.

### Introduction

Governance and Leadership are two key concepts crucial to understanding the decision-making process and policy development at any institution of Higher Education. This chapter sets out to describe the UPR system’s governance structure and discuss how said structure operates in helping the system achieve sound operational academic and administrative practices while fostering a diverse system of autonomous campuses. The chapter also examines the UPR-Cayey’s local governance and demonstrates how administratively it complies with its academic, research, and services policies and practices that are expressed in UPR-Cayey’s Mission and Goals.

### GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Board (GB) is the highest governing authority within the organizational and governance structure of the UPR. Its role is primarily fiduciary. The current governing board structure is composed of 13 members. Nine of the members are named by the governor with the consent of the Puerto Rican Senate. These members are constituted by law under the following parameters: 1 member from the field of finance, 1 member representing community service initiatives on the island, five members who are alumni and who have gained prominence in areas such as the arts, sciences with the requirement that three of these five members be residents on the island. One of the five would also be a local resident with ties to the Puerto Rican communities abroad. To round out the GB body and involve the university community, students would occupy two seats with voice and vote on the board. The faculty would maintain its two seats as well. (Exhibit 70)

It is important to note that all members of the Governing Board are subject to the *Law of Governmental Ethics of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico* (Law No. 12, 1985). Furthermore, there are restrictive requirements placed on all potential members of the governing board. Restrictions include not being able to name members of the Puerto Rico legislature, nor any person who works for the government or other public corporations, with the exception of the UPR alumni and the Secretary of Education of Puerto Rico who serves on the Board in an ex-officio capacity. Restrictions also avoid naming employees of any private institution of higher education.

**Governing Board Responsibilities.** The Governing Board, through its policy-making role, is ultimately accountable for all macro structural components of the University system such as financial stability, academic excellence, and integrity, including accreditation; fiscal robustness, strategic planning, and assessment, among others. The Governing Board is vigilant as to the interest of all its components within the systemic context.

There are 24 responsibilities delineated by (Law No. 1, 1966, Exhibit 71), and the UPR General By-Laws (Exhibit 65). The GB has these responsibilities readily available at <http://juntagobierno.upr.edu/junta-de-gobierno/funciones/>). As a result of these responsibilities, the working agenda of this body is designed to promote compliance with the mission of developing academic and research activities for the benefit of the university community and society at large.

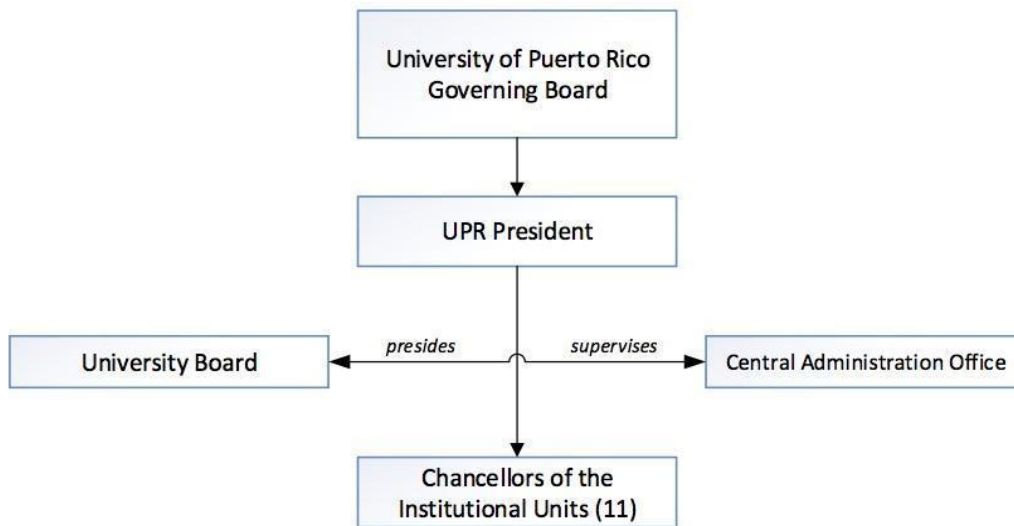
There are seven permanent committees responsible for overseeing key systemic areas: Academic, Research and Student Affairs; Appeals; Financial Affairs, Physical Infrastructure, and Retirement System; Audits; Development; Laws and Regulations; and Technology. In terms of communication with the campuses and broader university community, the Governing Board has a webpage (<http://juntagobierno.upr.edu>) where all the information regarding meetings, appointments, policies approved, and other relevant initiatives are posted. The Governing Board also shares approved certifications via the UPR System email to all community members (non-teaching, teaching, and students) where members simply click on the electronic link and gain ready access to the certifications.

Each year the members of the Governing Board elect a President, Vice President, and Secretary. These three positions also conform the Executive committee. The Board is administratively managed by an Executive Secretary, an employee of trust responsible for managing the Board’s administrative efforts.

**The UPR President.** The Governing Board appoints the UPR President. The GB decides and regulates the process of choosing a president within the different campuses and related offices. Traditionally, the GB constitutes a search committee and requires each campus to carry out a search process that involves student, faculty, employee and the external community’s point of views. The campuses report their recommendations to the GB who in turn receive campus recommendations and interview prospective candidates.

According to University By-Laws, the UPR President is responsible for organizing the administrative structures in order to meet the Mission and Goals of the UPR System (Article 14, Section 14.4, Appendix 2.1) (see Figure 2.1) . Currently, the President’s Office is composed of three vice presidencies (Academic Affairs, Students, and Research and Technology).

Figure 2.1 UPR Central Administration Organizational Chart



Aside from providing system-wide leadership and a key component of governance, the President’s office also supervises, administers and coordinates three other areas. These are finance, planning and development, and the budget. Nevertheless, each campus is legally responsible by law for locally administering these areas. Furthermore, each campus possesses autonomy in areas such as faculty, educational offerings, assessment, general education and student admissions, retention and support. See Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Another key responsibility of the President is chairing the University Board. The University Board meetings serve as the encounter of those responsible for administering the University and its constituents. The President's role is particularly important since the University Board addresses vital systemic issues such as development and strategic planning as well as budget related topics. Finally, the President's role also includes being an *ex officio* member of all 11 UPR academic senates and administrative boards.

The President represents the UPR system at legislative hearings and public functions. In addition, the President is also responsible for mediating agreements and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with other institutions and organizations that are in the best interest of the UPR System.

Our current Acting President, Dr. Celeste Freytes, assumed office in July, 2016. Dr. Freytes has held the position as Vice President of Academic Affairs from 2004-2009. She also served as Interim president on two separate occasions. She has served the UPR for close to 40 years and has had ample experience, as professor, administrator and researcher.

While the system has experienced an administrative change in the presidency, UPR-Cayey has maintained its leadership since 2014 when the current Chancellor was named to the position, sustaining continuity in governance and administration.

**The University Board.** The University Board consists of 38 members: the President of the UPR System; the UPR System's Director of Finance; three additional officials appointed by the President and approved by the Governing Board; the chancellors of the 11 campuses; 11 academic senate faculty members elected yearly by each academic senate from among its members (*ex officio* senate members are ineligible); 11 student representatives, one from each institutional unit, elected annually by each unit student body in an open election. Thus, the University Board's monthly meeting allows for an open and honest interaction between all constituents of the University.

The University Board's main responsibilities is to, first, guarantee that the University System complies with the approved strategic plan and, second, serves as an advisory board to the UPR President in the areas of academics and research, administration, student support and finances. The University Board offers recommendations and approves initiatives brought to the body in the areas of academics, administration, and finances and once approved by the University Board these are subsequently considered by the Governing Board.

These clearly defined roles are what assure that the key systemic initiatives are implemented and assessed by both the President as well as the campus representatives on the University Board. This form of governance guarantees that the planning, implementation process and decision making is a participatory and representative one. Moreover, these functions are carefully balanced to respect the autonomy of individual units.

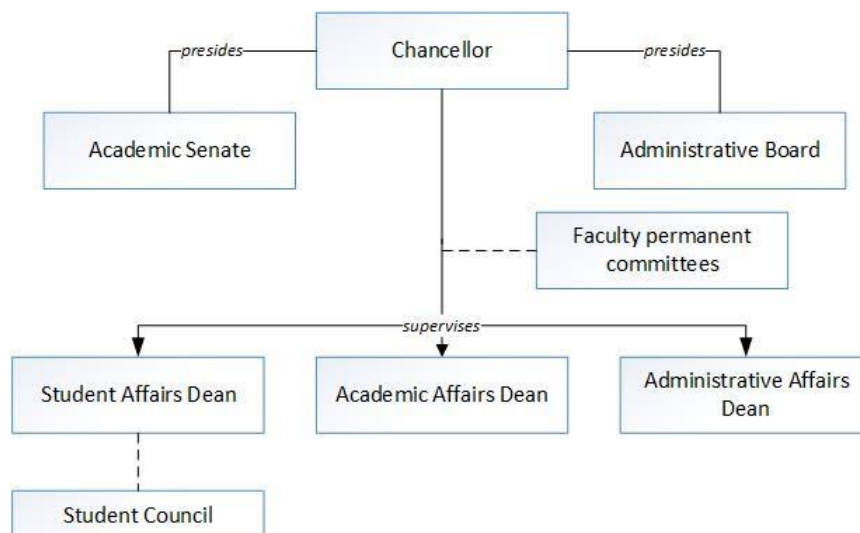
The UB manages the distribution of documentation from a password protected Course Management System (<http://juntauniversitaria.upr.edu>), allowing for ready access to all important documentation for members and ready access to approved certification by community members.

**Governance at the Campus Level.** The UPR-Cayey's basic organizational structure is characterized by ample participation opportunities for faculty, students and non-faculty personnel. UPR-Cayey administrative structure is very similar to that of the other seven undergraduate units of the UPR system and is illustrated in figure 2.2.

The UPR-Cayey Mission and Goals document guides all institutional activities. Accordingly, the UPR-Cayey 2006-2016 Strategic Plan (AS Certification 16, 2006-2007 Exhibit 72) sets the stage for accomplishing the institutional mission, meanwhile defining and identifying priorities, emblematic projects, and critical assessment areas. This, in turn, has provided the framework for the Strategic Plan of all academic leaders thus far, maintaining continuity of institutional goals, as well as complying with federal

requirements and accreditation standards at the institutional and programmatic level, mostly in times of transitions.

Figure 2.2 UPR-Cayey Governance Structure



**The Chancellor.** As established by law, the Chancellor is the highest academic and administrative authority at the institutional level (Chief Executive Officer). The current Chancellor is Dr. Mario Medina Cabán, former associate academic dean and dean for academic technology and director of the Office for Technology in Teaching. He possesses a BA in Education from UPR-Rio Piedras in the area of English to Speakers of Spanish, a Master’s degree from UPR-Rio Piedras in the area of English to Speakers of other languages, and a Ph.D. from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in English with a concentration in Rhetoric and Linguistics. He is a full professor in the English department and has over 20 years teaching experience and 10 years administrative experience as associate dean, director, Title III director, and Coordinator of Multi-Language Computer Center.

Dr. Medina Cabán was named by the Governing Board on July 2014 upon the recommendation of the former UPR President, Dr. Uroyoán Walker who, based on the UPR-Cayey consultation report submitted by the university community recommended to the Governing Board his designation as chancellor. Dr. Medina, as chancellor, serves at the discretion of the Governing Board.

The Chancellor’s duties are delineated in Section 19.3 of the UPR General By-Laws as well as in Article 7 of the University Law (Law 1, 1966). The responsibilities include the decisions and actions needed to support efficient management, maintain fiscal control, and improve services and processes to effectively allocate resources in rigorous compliance with institutional academic and administrative policies through coordinated, systematic, and sustained efforts.

**Deans.** Deans are appointed by the Chancellor and endorsed by the President. Yet, the Governing Board ultimately approves the appointment. Each candidate for Deanship follows a rigorous consultation process among faculty members, non-faculty, and students (Articles 20 and 37 of the UPR General By-Laws). The Organizational Chart for deanship clearly evidences the administrative responsibilities of Deans (See Appendix 2.2).



Figure 2.3 Qualifications and Experience of Current Deans

Dean	Qualifications	Leadership Experience
Dr. Raul Castro	Ph.D. in Chemistry	Interim Chancellor, Academic Dean and Associate Academic Dean
Prof. Belma Borrás	MBA and Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	Director of Accounting Department, Interim dean of business administration program, director of assessment program of school of business administration
Dr. Rochellie Martinez	Ed.D in Administration and Educational Supervision	Department chair, director of continuing education and as student counselor for a number of student organizations.

To successfully maintain continuity and stability, the UPR-Cayey has emphasized the selection of institutional leaders who possess the credentials and experience required for each position. Particular care has been given to the selection of personnel who in the past have occupied leadership positions within the shared government structure of the UPR-Cayey. It is also required that the candidate's strategic work plan be aligned with UPR-Cayey documents that are vital for achieving excellence in higher education. (See Dean's work plans, Appendix 2.3)

**Academic Senate.** As established in the UPR General By-Laws and reiterated in the UPR-Cayey Academic Senate internal regulations (Exhibit 73), the Academic Senate (AS) is the official forum to discuss general topics that affect the function of the university and issues in which the AS has jurisdiction. The Senate tends to a number of matters from course and curricula content to admission requirements. The Academic Senate at UPR-Cayey is composed of the University President, the Chancellor, the Deans and the Library director, who serve as ex-officio members, and a non-administrative representative from each academic department and two additional at-large faculty senators. In addition, a non-administrative representative from the Interdisciplinary Center for Student Development (psychologist and counselors), one docent member from the Library, and 6 students from the Student Council. The student ombudsperson has been added as an observer during the AS meetings (GB Certification 119, 2014-2015). The at-large senators are required to report during general faculty meetings.

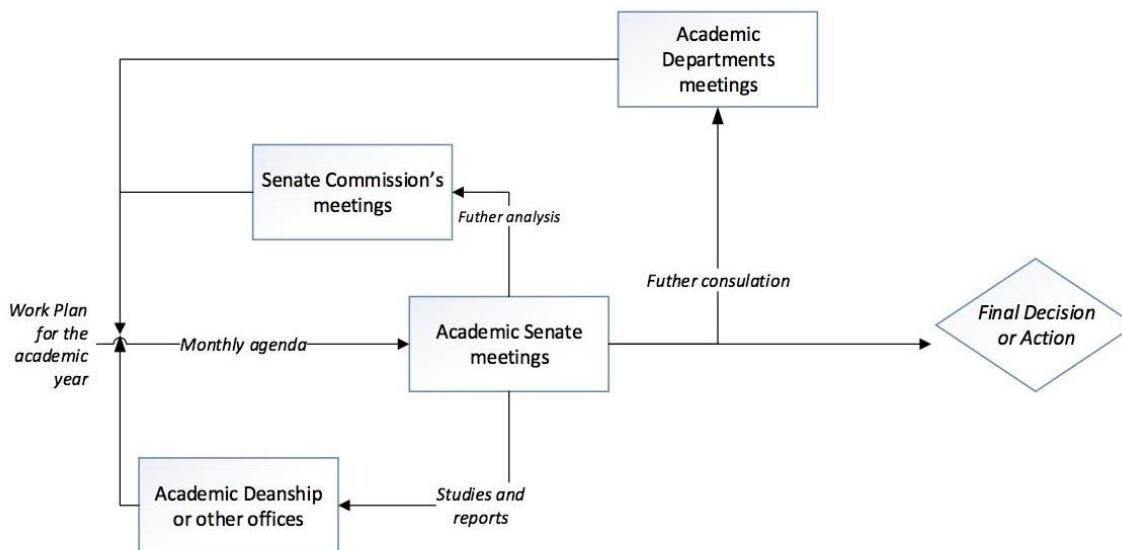
The Chancellor presides over the Academic Senate at UPR-Cayey. The senate's standing committees tend to all key academic, faculty related and student support issues. The Academic Senate plays a crucial role in advising in policy development, academic program evaluation and accreditations, and in determining admissions and related matters considering among institutions budget (See AS Certification 51, 2002-03, Exhibit 74). The certifications generated by the Academic Senate are made readily available to the entire community via the Academic Senates document management system (<https://senadocayey.upr.edu/>). The findings and certifications that result from the Senate's decisions and deliberation are disseminated widely and accessed on its website.

The Internal regulations of the UPR-Cayey Academic Senate, also places great emphasis on the declared responsibility of providing recommendations to the governing bodies such as the University

Board and the Governing Board in matters of academic concern whether it be the creation of new schools, or dependencies, academic distinctions as well as changes to the General Bylaws. Hence, the direct interaction between the academic senate of UPR-Cayey and governing bodies regarding local and systemic academic matters is important to note and illustrates the autonomous nature of each campus.

As illustrated in Figure 2.4, decision making at UPR-Cayey follows clear lines of communication between the executive level administration and its constituents. Decisions and final actions are the consequence not only of a well-defined work plan aligned to a strategic plan but also the response and input of the other representative bodies who brings in to the discussion diverse perspectives. It is ultimately this well programmed level of constituent involvement that assures key decisions.

Figure 2.4 Academic Decision Process



**Administrative Board.** The UPR-Cayey Administrative Board consists of the Chancellor; the three Deans (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Administration Affairs); the Library director, four of the eleven academic department chairs (who alternate every two years); two senators elected from among the non-*ex officio* members of the Academic Senate; and a student elected annually by his or her peers in general elections.

Chaired by the Chancellor, the Administrative Board approves the budget distribution that the Chancellor submits to Central Administration. The Board grants tenure and promotions as recommended by the faculty bodies who in turn recommend such actions to the academic dean. It also evaluates and concedes leaves of absence, sabbaticals and financial aid requests. During Board meetings, all personnel actions, administrative decisions and budgetary matters are discussed and assessed. Policies as well as regulations are certified and communicated to the community at large. Other important functions of the Administrative Board include establishing, through internal regulations, the structure and procedures for its operation in harmony with the University Law and the UPR General Bylaws. It advises the Chancellor in the performance of his duties elaborates projects and develops plans for this campus. It considers the evaluation of academic programs, the academic calendar, the student admittance quota, changes to the university organizational chart, and the changes to the organizational structure of the offices.

**General Student Council (GSC).** The UPR-Cayey facilitates and encourages student participation in university matters so that the institution can better meet student needs and simultaneously develop leadership. The General Student Council is the main student representative body on our campus. Furthermore, student participation is established in a representative manner via Article 10 of the University Law (Law 1, 1966) and incorporated into the UPR General Student Bylaws (Exhibit 75).

Students who partake in the student council at both the executive level as well as department representatives at UPR-Cayey have voice and vote in the department and faculty meetings, in the Academic Senate, Administrative Board, University Board, faculty, and institutional committees. Students also partake of general faculty meetings. Therefore, students are an important part of governance at both the system as well as the institutional level. Such engagement serves in developing leadership, better adjustments to student services as stated in the General Student Bylaws and evidenced in Chapter 5.

**Institutional Policies.** The UPR System of Governance is founded on an established order of rules and regulations according to Article 7 of the UPR General Bylaws. Hence, all of the policies, regulations, certifications and any other policy or practice must respond to said norm. The UPR General Bylaws, legal dispositions, Governing Board certifications, Presidential dispositions and decrees and University Board Certifications, inform all of UPR-Cayey's self-governance as well as its operation, administrative and academic tasks. The parameters are clearly established as to the norm that must be followed by the entire UPR-Cayey community.

Therefore, the norms, procedures, policies and resolutions that each local governing body approves follow the established hierarchy. Still, as stated in our Mission and Goals, UPR-Cayey strives for a democratic participation of its constituents and within our functional autonomy; UPR-Cayey encourages the participation of all of its constituents. The UPR-Cayey community receives approved certifications through electronic means and also has ready access to the academic senate certifications that are online. Thus, all community members are aware and have ready access to system-wide as well as institutional specific regulations, norms, dispositions and policy and practices.

**Leadership in Finance and the Institution's Strategic Planning.** The Chancellor's and the Deans' budget plans require collaboration from all sectors of the campus community. Reductions in non-essential operating expenses and the identification of additional funding sources are essential. To date, the institution has taken actions to increase revenues and reduce expenditures, particularly in salaries and benefits, while allowing the UPR-Cayey to confront the budget decline (*Budget presentation to Governing Board, 2015-16, Appendix 2.4*). Since September 2010, the plan led the UPR-Cayey to its fiscal stability and to achieve ongoing and sustained compliance with MSCHE Standard 3. The plan, followed by the UPR-Cayey since 2010, included two primary dimensions: (1) Securing continuity of operations and institutional effectiveness with available resources and; (2) Maintaining and nurturing additional sources of funding to continue advancing institutional educational, research and service priorities, for which progress will be documented and evidenced in Chapter 3.

For the past years, the Island's economy has been in recession, which has translated into a reduction of the government's revenues. As a consequence, the UPR general budget has also suffered further reductions. Coupled with the advent of a Federal Fiscal Control Board (2016), the government of Puerto Rico and the President's Office has issued a set of cautionary measures that include the following: freezing all vacant non-faculty positions and reducing operating expenses such as travel, equipment and utilities in order to cope with financial constraints. In addition, the UPR-Cayey administration implemented other internal measures to assure the continuity of all operations that support the institution's Mission, Goals, and Objectives. The actions taken by the leadership, documented and evidenced in Chapter 3, has benefited the UPR-Cayey in such a way, that the UPR-Cayey has been one of the few units within the UPR that has never ended the fiscal year with a deficit (*Annual Budget Report to the Administrative Board, Appendix 2.5*).

**Assessment of Leadership and Governance.** At the systemic level, assessment of leadership and governance is mandated by law (Law no. 1, 1966, Section 3 (e) (7)) and procedurally determined under Certification 50 (Board of Trustees, 2004-05, Exhibit 75). According to the UPR General Bylaws, the Governing Board must evaluate the President and Chancellors within three years of their incumbency. The current Chancellor was appointed on June 2014 and the most recent assessment process calls for the chancellor to present an achievement report for each academic year.

The institution's deliberative and constituent bodies of the UPR-Cayey have assessed their roles regarding the institution's fulfillment of its mission and goals. The assessment of the Administrative Board and the Academic Senate policies and bylaws lead to the alignment with the most recent systemic regulations (Revision of Academic Senate Regulations, AS 2014, Appendix 2.6; Revisions of the Administrative Board, June 28, 2011, Appendix 2.7).

## **ADMINISTRATION**

As observed in Figure 2.2, UPR-Cayey operates under a three level administrative structure. The first level is comprised of the Chancellor and the advisory bodies that respond directly to the chancellor's Office. The Second level comprised the three deans who administer and are responsible for Academic, Administrative and Student affairs. All three deanships are responsible for basic administrative operations. The third level included offices and organizational units of each deanship. (See Appendix 2.8)

**Academic Departments.** To better understand administration at the UPR-Cayey, the focus in this standard looks at local governance. Academic departments, under the Dean of Academic Affairs are key in organizing and carrying out the academic activity at UPR-Cayey in addition to furthering self-governance processes. For this reason, department chairs play a crucial leadership as well as administrative role in guaranteeing faculty participation in all key academic decisions at the department level while also channeling administrative and academic concerns to other administrative and governance tiers. Each department chair is responsible for administrating and coordinating available financial and human resources to fulfill the academic offerings. In March 14, 2013, the Administrative Board approved a manual for department chairs (See Exhibit 77). This document not only serves as a guide to chairs but also includes the assessment procedure for department chairs and the scope of responsibilities chairs must meet.

Permanent committees at the department level include personnel and curriculum. Under Article 25.6 of the General Bylaws, departments may also create ad-hoc committees charged with specific tasks such as reaccreditation or assessment. Such committees are in place in each department.

According to UPR-Cayey's Faculty Regulations (Chapter 2, Article 8, Exhibit 78), there are six-faculty committees at the institutional level. Each academic department has a representative on said committees. These committees are Curriculum, Personnel, General Education, Planning and Assessment and Faculty Agenda.

At UPR-Cayey, departments are grouped in three areas for planning and organizational purposes (Exhibit 78). The academic departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Mathematics-Physics constitute the Natural Sciences Area; the English, Hispanic Studies, Humanities, and Social Sciences departments constitute the Area of Arts; librarians, counselors, psychologists, researchers as well as the Education, Business Administration constitute the Professional Schools Area.

Area meetings are held each semester and chaired by the academic dean. Departments are required to meet every month. All department meetings must include a senate report as well as address issues relating to academics, administrative concerns and any other topic that the faculty deems necessary. All of these interactions contribute to the decision making process. According to the Director's manual, there are seven standing committees. These are: personnel, curriculum, planning and assessment, learning

resources, activities, General Education and accreditation (if applicable). Student representatives of each department have voice and vote in department matters.

**Administrative Chairpersons.** The Chairpersons are non-teaching personnel who may or may not be career personnel and who are in positions of trust. There are positions of trust at all levels of leadership at UPR-Cayey, these include Director of Budget, Finance, Human Resources, and other high-ranking positions that are similar to the categories previously mentioned. (As established in Section 71.3.2 of the UPR General Bylaws). The Chancellor appoints office directors after consulting with members of the particular dependency (UPR Bylaws Article 37 Section 37.3.2).

**Non-Teaching Staff.** The qualified non-instructional staffs at UPR-Cayey comply with the rules and regulations in great measure as a result of the Human Resources Office efforts. The HR office is responsible for ensuring employee compliance with local and system wide rules and regulations. In addition, administrative tasks such as extensions to probationary periods, leaves, and credit for previous experience in similar positions are essential to its daily tasks.

The *UPR General Bylaws*, Chapter VIII, Article 80 establishes the evaluation period for non-teaching staff. All non-teaching staff is evaluated twice, midway through the employment time and just before tenure consideration. Probationary periods vary but according to the General Bylaws, they can last no less than four months and no longer than a year. These evaluations are by regulation carried out by the employee's supervisor. Employees gain tenure if they receive a positive evaluation and recommendation. Yet, the Administrative Board eventually ratifies said decisions. There is no further formal evaluation procedure established for non-teaching staff.

The UPR Central Administration as well as UPR-Cayey are committed to respecting the negotiated work conditions and continuously meet with the union representatives. While collective bargaining is coordinated by the President's office, all campuses abide by negotiated terms. There is an institutional committee that meets with a representative from the administration named directly by the chancellor. In addition, the union delegates hold monthly meetings with the director of human resources to attend to work conditions and any pressing matter. The Chancellor is committed to ensuring a democratic discussion with employees and has met and tended to union delegates and system level union leaders. Non-teaching staff, both those that provide administrative support and those performing maintenance services, are organized in labor associations that negotiate with the University. The collective bargaining process is coordinated by the President's office.

Non-teaching employees play an active role in university matters. The level of participation of university constituents shows substantial involvement of all community members in academic and administrative areas. The range of areas these committees cover runs from the institutional related topics to specific areas of university-wide life. Yet, the important observation is that at UPR-Cayey constituents are a critical and planned part of governance and administration.

**Effective Communication.** As stated in our Mission, Goals and Objectives, UPR-Cayey aims to be innovative and up to date with technological advances. For this reason, the administration utilizes a number of creative and innovative ways of communicating relevant matters to the university community (Figure 2.4). Not only does the UPR-Cayey use forums, meetings, electronic distribution of material, distribution of printed material as well as posted information in student spaces, but social media also plays an important role informing the university community and receiving feedback from the university community and community at large. UPR-Cayey uses its Facebook and Twitter accounts as an information hub and utilizes the analytic tools these social tools provide to measure its effectiveness (See *Analytics Analysis*, Appendix 2.9). The Facebook account jumped from 2,500 likes in 2014 to more than 10,418 likes or followers in 2013. This use of social media is an integral part of the Chancellor's work plan. The Twitter account reached the amount of 3,500 followers in less than two years. It has automated both services so that all relevant and important information is placed on these media. UPR-Cayey shares events, news, alliances, cultural initiatives as well as academic and student events. The registered

traffic demonstrates not only the amount of people reached but the data also reflects that the information reaches its followers via organic means and not as a consequence of paid boosts. The Facebook pages channels all relevant academic, cultural as well as official notifications. It also serves to receive messages from the community at large.

For department level correspondence, the institutional email is used. The institution, as a whole, has moved to an entirely paperless communication. From administrative information to payment stubs all information regarding employees and administrative events are distributed via electronic means. Google Drive is the official medium for official documents and information that is developed for policy as well as administrative purposes. Department chairs, department secretaries, associate deans and deanship staff have ready access to the information they are managing and responsible for.

Figure 2.4 Channels of Communication

Population	Media	Description and Location
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic Newsletter</li> <li>• Electronic Media Huella Torito</li> <li>• Youtube Channel Torito</li> <li>• WebTV</li> <li>• Twitter Accounts</li> <li>• Facebook Accounts</li> <li>• Institutional Email</li> <li>• Institutional Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic Newsletter distributed via email</li> <li>• Student centered programing covering series of topics and events</li> <li>• Cultural Activities Facebook Page</li> <li>• Student Organizations</li> <li>• Facebook Page</li> <li>• www.cayey.upr.edu</li> <li>• Chancellor's Page</li> </ul>
Non-teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional Email</li> <li>• Institutional Electronic Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UPR-Cayey Facebook Page</li> <li>• www.cayey.upr.edu</li> <li>• Chancellor's Page</li> </ul>
Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional Email</li> <li>• Google Drive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UPR-Cayey Facebook Page</li> <li>• www.cayey.upr.edu</li> <li>• Chancellor's Page</li> </ul>

In the same manner, social media also serves for community members to voice concerns and express themselves freely. UPR-Cayey in its commitment to developing a critical and constructive environment as is stated in our mission and goals statement, the administration guarantees its constituents the right to free expression and congregation within organized and recognized groups that have complied with institutional codes as according to UPR General Bylaws and Students General Bylaws.

**Findings**

The University of Puerto Rico at Cayey prides itself in the accomplishment of a well-balanced shared governance structure through community participation. Therefore, findings are as follow:

1. The UPR-Cayey has benefited from the leadership and commitment of faculty, staff and students since the 2005 Self-Study Report. A strong leadership and a strong community has steered Cayey to fulfill its mission and goals even during times of turmoil.

2. There are clear policies and procedures for the selection of qualified faculty administrators. Administrative positions have been held by qualified and committed faculty of the UPR-Cayey representing the collective and diverse ideas within the community.
3. There is an effort to assess institutional effectiveness. The bylaws, policies, procedures and handbooks of the Academic Senate and Administrative Board were revised by the constituents in each level of shared government.
4. A shared government is fostered through all levels of the academic environment. There are ample opportunities for communication within the UPR-Cayey between the academic administrator, faculty, students and staff.
5. Academic administrators, faculty, students and staff uphold the idea of excellence of the daily administration of the campus.
6. The current fiscal situation has moved the administration to implement creative solutions to counter negative repercussions of budget cuts.
7. There is an ongoing bilateral communication between the Governing Board and the Institution by personal and electronic means thus guaranteeing democratic participation of all university community sectors.

## **NEXT STEPS**

As result of the self-study process, the UPR-Cayey will:

1. Continue to search for potential fundraising initiatives that may lessen the dependence on Central Administration budget allocation. (Further discussion is available in Chapter 3)
2. Support assessment initiatives (AS Certification 23, 2004-05, Exhibit 76) as well as other documents such as the Institutional Leadership Survey presented to the Academic Senate, and the Achievements and Challenges Report of December 2008 and September 2009 and is committed to approving a more formative governance assessment model by April 2017.
3. Continue to assess current administrative processes and institutional practices that are also being considered by the University of Puerto Rico Governing Board. The report is due during the 2017-18 academic year.

## CHAPTER 3: PLANNING FOR INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal. The Institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve the mission and goals, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation to support the development and changes necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality is likewise conducted and followed up.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources. Human, financial, technical, facilities and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of the ongoing outcome assessment.

### Introduction

The UPR-Cayey has been actively pursuing and assessing strategies with initiatives that have reduced the impact of the latest budget reductions and that in turn, will ease the impact of further reductions. These strategies have a direct impact on continued planning for institutional renewal and adequate management of resources. The Self-Study process has been a great tool for discussion that has yielded contributions from all sectors of the community to identify priorities and new initiatives in order to fulfill its mission and goals. This chapter will provide evidence of the UPR-Cayey's commitment to planning and assessment to ensure the best fiscal practices and continue to comply with the guidelines set forth by the laws that govern the UPR system.

### PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

**Strategic Planning and Assessment Process.** The UPR-Cayey's planning and assessment process is a continuous and dynamic venture to ensure the guidance and effectiveness in the allocation and use of the institutional resources (*Budget Alignment Document* Appendix 3.1) The institution's mission and goals, and the strategic plan are documents that serve as the framework for administration's operational plan and provide the tools for the successful achievement of the UPR-Cayey mission. The Academic Senate approves the strategic plan as well as operational plan. (Exhibit 79)

The Strategic Plan of the UPR-Cayey is a document aligned with the systemic UPR Strategic Plan *Ten for the Decade* (2006-2016) and sets the fundamental foundation for a dynamic process based on assessment and decision-making. The Institutional Planning and Assessment Committee is responsible for reviewing the ten-year cycle UPR-Cayey Strategic Plan document, thus ensuring the active participation of members of each unit, administrative, academic program, and students. The committee's reviewed document is submitted to the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board to further increase the active participation of the entire community. The Chancellor is responsible for the dissemination and discussion of the plan's progress to the Academic Senate, the Administrative Board, and the community at large. The Strategic plan was widely disclosed to all community members through staff meetings, electronic mails, faculty and non-faculty meetings, and the institutional web page. The Chancellor's report is based on the main areas of the strategic plan.

In accordance with the UPR-Cayey strategic plan, based on the goals established, operational plan developed and implemented to maximize resources and operational effectiveness (AS Certification 16, 2006-2007), the Chancellor establishes his or her priorities for the academic year based on several goals, such as: to foster organizational and administrative efficiency, financial diversification, and to enhance academic, curricular and extracurricular initiatives. Some of the initiatives taken to fulfill the goals are:

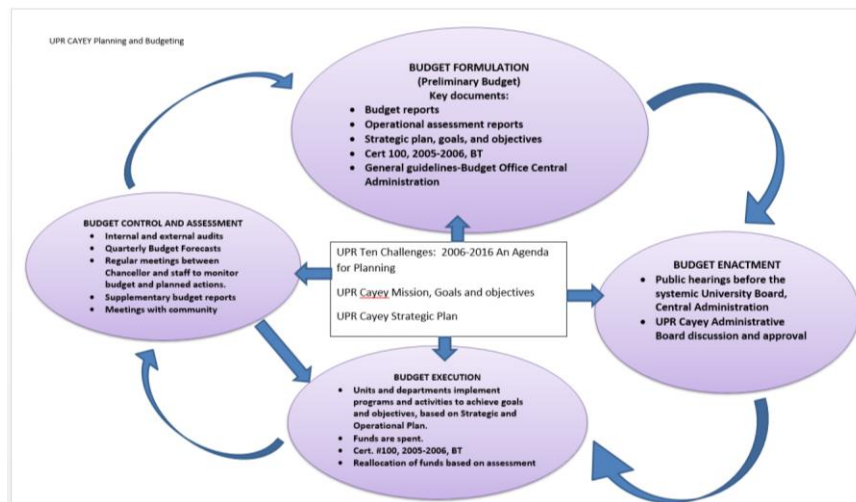


assessment of administrative and student services, continued support of external evaluation of administrative processes by State and UPR agencies, assessment of the infrastructure maintenance plan, updating the staff's professional development plan, promoting efficiency by means of technology, foster competitive grant application, establish online courses by the DECEP, establish university enterprises, enhance alumni donations through activities, increase the athletic program and the local online television station exposure and performance, and to promote the UPR-Cayey academic offering throughout the web, student fairs, and student organizations activities. The plan identifies the deanship responsible for achieving each goal. The Chancellor presents the plan to the Academic Senate and to the Planning and Assessment Institutional Committee for further recommendations. The plan will be assessed at the end of the academic year (See Chapter 6 for a full discussion on institutional assessment practices).

**Successful management and budget allocation.** The UPR-Cayey's budget allocation process is determined by planning and assessment results. All funding allocated to the UPR-Cayey is administered using municipal, state, federal and institutional regulations and bylaws (Appendix 3.2). The diversity of bylaws and procedures regulates and helps examine the utilization of both internal and external funds.

The institutional budgeting process starts with the formulation of the budget for the following year based on annual strategic priorities and assessment results from the institutional effectiveness of the previous year. The Central Administration Budget Office issues a general guideline for the distribution of resources and discusses the budgetary outlook for the next fiscal year with the chancellors and their respective budget directors. The UPR System Governing Board determines budget allocations for each system unit upon the recommendation of the President and the University Board (Figure 3.1). Appendix 3.3 illustrates the interaction between budget and planning at the UPR-Cayey.

Figure 3.1 Successful management and budget allocation



All academic and administrative needs are discussed and submitted through each of the Deans to the Chancellor and translated in budget allocations to ensure fulfillment of institutional missions and goals and the improvement of academic and administrative operations as well.

In order to secure the continuity of operations and institutional effectiveness with available resources, the UPR-Cayey assesses the current budget and establishes a mechanism to redistribute budget assignments in relation to priorities set in the academic development plan (Appendix 3.4). Under the assumption that no extra money would be added during the next fiscal year, allotments of both faculty and non-instructional staff who retire are budgeted (Appendix 3.5).

The Chancellor, Deans and Budget Director prepare the following year's budget based on the assessment of each deanships office (Appendix 3.6). The institutional priority establishes that monies are to be distributed to accounts that support specific development projects that are part of the Academic Deanship's development plan (aligned with the institution's Mission and Goal, and the Operational Plan) (Appendix 3.7). Priorities among these projects are discussed and endorsed by all department chairs and reported every year to the faculty (Appendix 3.8). Reductions in nonessential operating expenses and the identification of additional funding sources are essential to the plan. To date, the institution has taken actions to increase revenues and reduce expenditures, particularly in salaries and benefits, while allowing the UPR-Cayey to confront the budget decline (Appendix 3.9).

Under the leadership of the Chancellor, each year the Administrative Board of the UPR-Cayey approves the budget. The adopted budget takes into consideration other priorities in which decisions on resource allocation must be made in relation to planning and assessment. These include the following: professional development of faculty and non-faculty personnel, student admission and retention initiatives and distribution of technological resources (Appendix 3.10). The continuous implementation of the plan provides the necessary mechanisms to accomplish this task.

The Action Plan (Appendix 3.11) has been followed during the last five years and has led UPR-Cayey to its fiscal stability as well as achieves ongoing and sustained compliance with MSCHE Standards. The success of the plan required an increased collaboration from all sectors of the campus community. The Chancellor and Deans have made use of a variety of mechanisms to maintain the university community informed of the institution's financial constraints as well as initiatives to manage the budget according to institutional priorities, thus guaranteeing academic quality in all its undergraduate offerings, services rendered and endeavors. These mechanisms have offered many opportunities for constituent input during decision-making processes as documented and evidenced (Monitoring Report).

The preliminary budget is prepared based on the following information: number of students enrolled in courses, the number of classes and sessions open and needed, the number of faculty and non-instructional staff needed to effectively serve the enrolled students, administrative infrastructure, ratios of effectiveness, services provided to students, projections, and new projects. The preliminary budget is submitted to Central Administration for discussion and defense in public hearings before the University Board where the Chancellor summarizes the budget allocation due to assessment results and strategic planning. Then, the preliminary budget is submitted to the UPR-Cayey Administrative Board for discussion and approval.

The UPR-Cayey Administrative Board approves the budget and once it has done so, the Chancellor shares this information with the university community-at-large, and makes it available to users; the Budget director assesses institutional resources and submits a financial forecast to Central Administration Budget Office, three times a year. The report is discussed in staff meetings with Chancellor and Deans, and provides valuable information for decision-making and to determine strategic budget allocations.

Every month, or even with more frequency, the Chancellor meets with his staff to discuss operational issues that include the monitoring of the budget and planned activities. Similarly, each Dean holds a meeting with their employees to discuss budget and planning activities, among others. The community is also informed about planning and budget allocations through a series of meetings with faculty and non-faculty personnel, at least 2 times a year. Reports submitted to the Academic Senate and Administrative Board is also part of the assessment process. The Timetable for the UPR-Cayey budget process is presented in Appendix 3.12.

**Infrastructure Renewal.** The institution assesses its infrastructure and renewal proposal and submits it to the President's Office for approval and funding by the Governing Board. The institutional renewal proposal takes into consideration the historical and ecological values of the structure. All academic and capital improvement projects for the institution arise from participatory processes. The Academic Senate, faculty, non-instructional staff and departmental meetings provide an opportunity for community members

to voice their needs, discuss their projects, and express their views on the direction of institutional renewal and development. The Five-Year Infrastructure Improvement Plan is prepared based on the needs determined at these meetings. A list of the recent improvement projects completed, in progress, or planned, is included in Appendix 3.13.

**UPR-Fiscal Trends and Cayey Budget Action Plan.** The Budget development in alignment with institutional planning, mission and goals are a primary responsibility of governance, within the calendar processes and regulations for its yearly development, as established by the BT Certification 100, 2005-2006 (Appendix 3.14). The Central Administration Budget Office issues general guidelines for the distribution of resources and discusses the budgetary outlook for the next fiscal year with the chancellors and their respective budget directors. The Governing Board ultimately determines budget allocations for the System upon the recommendation of the President considering the recommendations of the University Board. In compliance with institutional processes, the Central Administration Budget Director develops a budget for each Unit.

**UPR and UPR-Cayey Actions to Deal with Budget Constraints.** In 2009, Directive R-0809-16 from the President of the UPR provided the UPR with a set of cautionary measures (*Medidas Cautelares*). The expected outcome of the actions was to reduce the impact of a foreseeable reduction in the funds allocated to the UPR. The main actions included freezing all vacant administrative positions, and reducing operating expenses such as travel, paper usage and consumption, equipment, and utilities. Furthermore, in 2013, the current Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico instituted Directive OE-2013-003 that supported R-0809-16, as additional measures for austerity and budgetary precautions, which included all state agencies (Appendix 3.14).

In August 2014, the Office of the President of the UPR presented an assessment plan with the expected goal to identify areas that required an in-depth assessment before submitting the Unit budget request for the next fiscal year (Appendix 3.15). The areas are Academic Effectiveness, Research Effectiveness, Student Services, and Administration. The expected goal was to justify the budget, based on institutional effectiveness. Also, the assessment plan took the following into consideration:

1. No increase in State funds,
2. Decrease in other State funds such as special legislations,
3. Redistribution of UPR funds to comply with priorities, and
4. Expected changes in Puerto Rico’s demographic profile.

The UPR-Cayey presented this collected data to the community to support the UPR-Cayey budget request. (Appendix 3.16)

At the same time, the Governing Board of the UPR approved a set of guidelines that have a profound impact on the daily administration of the UPR. (See Figure 3.2)

Figure 3.2 Guidelines

Governing Board Certification	Summary
Num. 50 (2014-15)	Set the institutional goal of increasing retention, graduation and an increase in the number of underrepresented students to the UPR. The certification provides measurable goals.
Num. 105 (2014-15)	Set a regular UPR wage compensation table of services rendered by the faculty to the UPR. The certification included teaching and research wage compensation.
Num. 145 (2014-15)	Overhaul of some institutional processes and practices to optimize efficiency.

Num. 148 (2014-15)	Delay of the proposed tuition increase. The certification provided an additional year for discussion within the shared government structure.
Num. 168 (2014-15)	Initiate discussion regarding the effectiveness of the student tuition exception protocol.
Num. 151, 153, 154, ad 155 (2014-15)	All the certifications deal with the UPR pension plan. Include an increase in retirement age (from 55 to 58,), an increase in employee deduction (1% increase) and a 12% payroll deduction for new employees.
Num. 152 (2014-15)	The corresponding Unit will delay faculty promotion until the funds are identified. This is the seventh consecutive year of promotion delays.
Num. 157 (2014-15)	Update of the UPR internal audit protocols. The certification included a work plan.

The UPR-Cayey is the third unit within the UPR with the highest funds allocated during the 2011 to 2014 period (Figure 3.3). When the average number of enrolled students divides the funds, the funds per student assigned to the UPR-Cayey is \$10,600.

Figure 3.3 2011-14 average State funds allocation to undergraduate unit (in thousands)

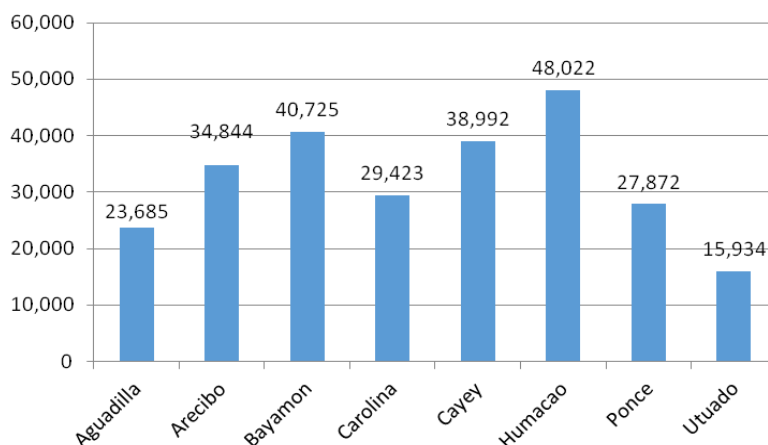
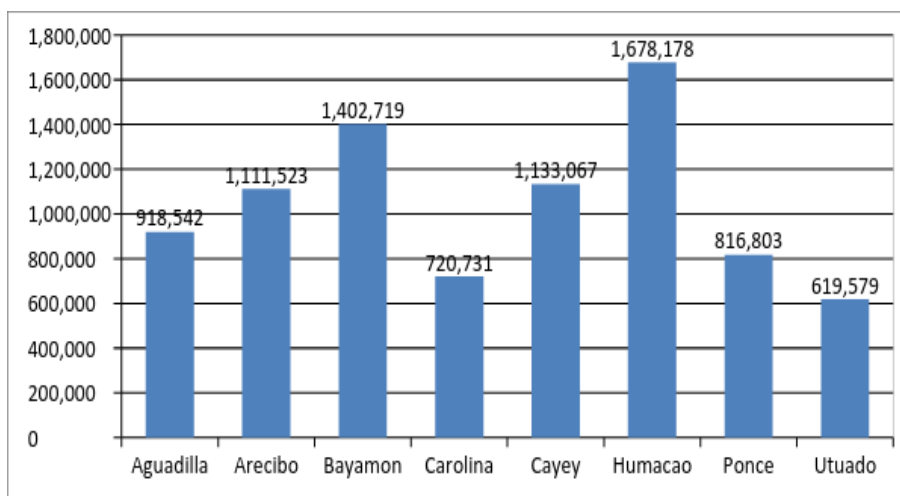


Figure 3.4 shows that the UPR-Cayey is the third undergraduate unit within the UPR that spent the most toward instruction. Instruction is defined as faculty, staff, research, student support services, academic offering, utilities, and support for the educational environment. This evidence the effectiveness of its budget assessment plan and the deliberate effort to provide the resources needed for the students. Institutional effectiveness indicators may also support this effort; the UPR-Cayey is the second undergraduate unit with the highest retention rate (44%).

Figure 3.4 2011 to 2014 UPR-Cayey average budget spent in instruction



**UPR-Cayey Fiscal Resources.** In 2009, the UPR-Cayey’s five-year budget projection (2010-2015) assumed a relatively regular budget allocation for each fiscal year. The assumption was based on the expected effectiveness of a set of cautionary measures issued by the President’s Office, which included freezing all vacant administrative positions, and the reduction of operating expenses such as travel, paper consumption, equipment, and utilities. In addition, the UPR-Cayey implemented a set of measures to improve efficiency in the use of human and fiscal resources. The measures’ goal was to assure the continuity of all operations that support the institution’s Mission, Goals, and Objectives. The UPR-Cayey measures used were as follow:

1. Task redistributions among administrative personnel
2. Restructuring of institutional processes
3. Making more efficient use of available technologies
4. Merging offices and programs with similar functions
5. An increase in the institution’s investment in infrastructure using external funds
6. Reduction of electricity consumption and air conditioning efficiency
7. An increase in course capacity, among others.

As seen in Figure 3.5, the UPR-Cayey 2013 to 2015 project budget was below that of the operating actual budget, due in part to the system-wide cautionary measures adopted in 2009. (Appendix 3.17).

Figure 3.5 Fiscal year projected and operating budget

Fiscal Year	Projected	Operating budget at the beginning of the fiscal year	Difference
2013-14	36,806,440	35,735,938	(1,070,502)
2014-15	37,174,505	37,166,960	(7,545)
2015-16	37,546,210	36,912,660	(633,550)
Average	37,175,718	36,605,186	(570,532)

### UPR-CAYEY BUDGET ALLOCATION TRENDS AND OUTCOMES

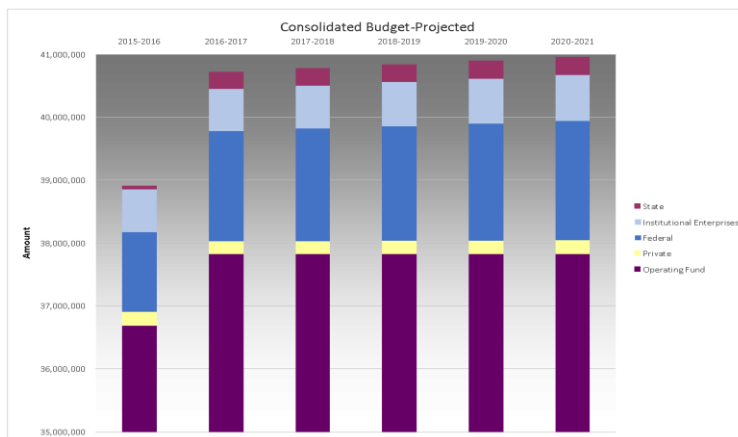
Annually, approximately 3.81% of the systemic budget is allocated to the UPR-Cayey to accomplish its educational goals. The budget allocation process developed at the UPR-Cayey in 2009 establishes that first priorities are identified based on prior year assessment results, followed by an analysis performed by each dean to establish measurable activities and assessment. (Appendix 3.18) Finally, the budget is allocated in order to accomplish activities in accordance with institutional priorities and strategies.

Trends in the actual budget (Certified by the UPR-Cayey Administrative Board) and spent budget (Certified by the UPR-Cayey Budget Office) between fiscal years 2011 until 2015 are presented in Figure 3.6. The increase is due to funds transferred by the Central Administration to cover institutional projects, student support services, and funds generated by various internal sources to the UPR-Cayey, among others (Appendix 3.19).

Figure 3.6 UPR-Cayey budgets 2011 to 2015

Fiscal Year	Operating Budget (Actual) July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Operating Budget (Spend) June 30th	Difference
2011-12	\$36,090,820.00	\$38,274,398.71	\$2,183,578.71
2012-13	\$35,124,262.00	\$39,369,942.00	\$4,245,680.00
2013-14	\$35,735,938.00	\$39,632,772.00	\$3,896,834.00
2014-15	\$37,166,960.00	\$39,458,334.58	\$2,291,374.58
2015-16	\$36,912,660.00	\$36,655,660.00	(\$257,000.00)
Average	\$36,206,128.00	\$ 38,678,221.46	\$2,472,093.46

The following charts show the sources of the consolidated budget for UPR-Cayey and projected for a five-year period.



**Trends in external funding.** Throughout the years, the UPR-Cayey maintained its operations without compromising academic and administrative operations/excellence and student support services and life. The UPR-Cayey has been able to keep a balanced budget and to maintain all institutional indicators relatively constantly supplementing budget with external funding (Appendix 3.20). Figure 3.7 show that UPR-Cayey trends in external funding 2011 to 2015.

Figure 3.7 Trends in external funding at the UPR-Cayey

Fiscal Year	Actual Budget July 1st	Other Allocations	Research Grants	Other Grants or projects	Consolidated Budget June 30 <sup>th</sup>
2011-12	\$36,090,820.00	2,183,578.71	882,176.00	2,612,764.29	41,769,339.00
2012-13	\$35,124,262.00	4,167,557	1,137,136.00	3,501,796.40	43,930,751.40
2013-14	\$35,735,938.00	3,815,393	610,447.00	3,272,631.35	43,434,409.35
2014-15	\$37,166,960.00	2,234,799.52	628,132.50	2,143,696.08	42,377,038.16
2015-16	\$36,912,660.00	(257,000)	580,867.40	1,676,619.73	38,913,147.13

The UPR-Cayey is actively pursuing external funds to complement its budget. Figure 3.8 shows the source and amount of funds granted to the institution for a period of five years. The trend during those years reflects that the UPR-Cayey has been successful in acquiring training grants from NIH, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, NSF and US Department of Education. A number of funds from institutional enterprises also increased over the years.

Figure 3.8 External funding 2011 to 2015

Source	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Federal	\$ 2,367,314.49	\$ 2,410,878.51	\$ 1,664,212.00	\$ 1,861,465.97	\$ 1,267,910.44
State	574,917.00	1,489,722.00	1,416,130.35	56,252.00	60,901.00
Private	91,343.00	225,000.00	225,000.00	225,000.00	225,000.00
Institutional Enterprises	461,365.80	513,331.89	577,736.00	615,470.55	673,109.09
Total	\$ 3,494,940.29	\$ 4,638,932.40	\$ 3,883,078.35	\$ 2,758,188.52	\$ 2,226,920.53

**Successful management of the budget.** To ensure the efficient administration of funds, UPR-Cayey has taken the following actions:

1. Restructuring administrative offices, redistributing tasks, and revising executive positions. Several academic programs, and administrative offices have been restructured, and tasks have been redistributed to make more efficient use of personnel; the Assessment and Institutional Research Office has been restructured, with the following results: a more efficient way of budget allocation, based on assessment, continuity of a linked planning, budgeting, and assessment process, tasks from the elimination of positions identified as nonessential have been redistributed, thus reducing expenses for salaries and benefits.
2. Continuous monitoring of academic offerings. Course capacity established at the maximum level permitted for each class type without hindering academic excellence and student learning outcomes. Courses with occupancy of less than 75% are closed, except when the Registrar's Office certifies that students graduating during that particular academic session are enrolled. Assessment of students' academic course petition serves as the basis for semester course

scheduling. Electives not forming part of program requirements and other related educational activities will be offered through the Extended University (UnEx) and the Continued Education and Professional Studies Division (DECEP), which provides an opportunity for establishing a variety of tuition fees.

3. Amendment of Faculty Compensations Practice courses over 30 students (Administrative Board's Certification)
4. Programmatic Assessment, following the Institutional Assessment Roadmap and guidelines established by the BT Certification 43, 2006-07, Exhibit 81), of all programs whose potential demand for admission is inferior to its capacity. This provides the Academic Senate documented evidence to make recommendations to the Administrative Board for action to be taken regarding programmatic and institutional effectiveness. To date, the baccalaureates of Arts in Economics, Elementary Education major in Social Studies, Office Technology and Administration, Secondary Education in History, Secondary Education in Social Sciences and the Associate's Degree in Office Technology and Administration have been placed on moratorium following these guidelines, while other programs identified as not mission-critical, and that exhibit low programmatic effectiveness (e.g., low graduation rates) are under evaluation.
5. Establishment of MSCHE recommendations for achieving financial stability.
6. Establishing a Risk Assessment Plan that includes the above strategies.
7. Meetings with different community sectors, including labor unions, students, and other community representatives to discuss the institution's financial situation and gather input for improvements

***Increase Resources by Means of External Funding.*** Reducing administrative costs, leading to a surplus of the Extended University (UnEx) and the Continuing Education and Professional Studies Division (DECEP) as self-sustainable programs, and transforming them into potential sources of added income by the following actions:

1. Offering elective courses that are not required for degree completion, but rather serve as related educational experience.
2. Establishing practices by which students must enroll in the UnEx to repeat courses after some repeated intents towards course completion (e.g., after the second repetition).
3. Reducing the number of student tuition exemptions.
4. Creating equivalences for faculty compensations in a manner proportionate to the student enrollment per section.
5. Offering remedial courses and certification courses through the DECEP.
6. Promoting the submission of proposals through the DECEP that impact the public school system, and offer professional development experiences to teachers, while providing additional sources of funding to UPR-Cayey.
7. Offering college level courses to high school honor students, thus promoting and increasing admission to the UPR-Cayey.

Trends in institutional income from research proposals and the Intramural Practice Plan have been assessed, and practices are currently underway that has led to the following actions:

1. Identification of areas with the largest return on investment (ROI) in which proposal submission should be prioritized and stimulated.



2. Development of an internal policy for the redistribution of funds for release time obtained through research grants to the institution's operational fund.
3. Revision of the Intramural Practice Plan Policy locally so that the institution can recuperate its investment in these proposals while gaining an added income for operational funds.
4. Revision of the internal distribution of claimed Facilities and Administrative Cost for research proposals to strengthen the institution's operational fund.

Strengthening of the External Resources Office through the following:

1. Developing an information system for managing proposal-related information more efficiently and integrating post-award operations and services.
2. The Alumni and Development Office has been restructured so that it has a greater presence in students' lives upon their admission to the UPR-Cayey and through their transition to alumni by establishing a closer relationship to the Deanship of Student Affairs.
3. The Chancellor's Synergistic Model for Securing External Funding which included strengthening the interrelationship between the UPR-Cayey and regional municipalities, government agencies, and the private industry in order to identify areas in which the UPR-Cayey can act as a service provide

**External Fund Outcomes.** The Institution set forward a plan to increase the number of the successful grant applications, including an aggressive effort to increase the number of projects sponsored by state agencies. As the result of the efforts to increase the number of successful proposals, for the fiscal year 2016-2017, the NIH awarded UPR-Cayey \$1,560,642 for a five-year RISE Project and the project Innovative Programs to Enhance Research Training (IPERT) (R25), \$2,575,090 approximately in five years. Also, the Puerto Rico Department of Education awarded the UPR-Cayey \$210,600 for the project Analysis and Data in the Accountability Report of the Public Schools of Puerto Rico. Figure 3.9 shows the external funds projected for a period of five years.

Figure 3.9 External Funds Projected

<b>External funding-Projected</b>					
<b>Source</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
Federal	\$ 1,752,512.84	\$1,787,563	\$ 1,823,314	\$ 1,859,781	\$ 1,896,976
State	271,501	276,931	282,470	288,119	293,881
Private	200,000	204,000	208,080	212,242	216,486
Institutional Enterprises	673,109	686,571	700,303	714,309	728,595
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,897,122.93</b>	<b>\$ 2,955,065.39</b>	<b>\$ 3,014,166.70</b>	<b>\$ 3,074,450.03</b>	<b>\$ 3,135,939.03</b>

**Human Resources.** In 2015, a total of 206 faculty members, and 345 non-instructional staff served in diverse roles to support learning-related activities for the 3,707 students in the first semester of the 2015-16 academic year. The faculty equals 37% of all UPR-Cayey employees and tends to approximately 700 sections of courses per semester with an average of 23 students per section. (See Chapter 4 for a full discussion). The regular course load for faculty is 12 credits per semester, and the student-faculty ratio (FTE) is 18:1. As mentioned in Section 2.2, the university's student carrying capacity has decreased in the past years to match the actual human and physical resources available.

**Infrastructure.** The UPR-Cayey has 167 acres of land and eight main buildings. Buildings like the Miguel Meléndez Muñoz and Carlos Iñiguez were built in the 1930's as part of the U.S. military base, Henry Barracks, and therefore have a historical value to Cayey and Puerto Rico. The grounds in front of the campus were once a golf course, the only one in the center of the island. Today, the grounds are one of the biggest distinctions of the UPR-Cayey for its beauty and ecological value, likewise as a resource for the enhancement of the academic experience and student life by serving as an outdoor curricular and extra-curricular activity center—some faculty use it to meet with students in their courses, or use its

biodiversity to address subject matter in Botany, Taxonomy, or to teach courses from diverse disciplines; it contains the institution's women's and men's varsity soccer field, serves as the university's cross-country field, which also serves as the Inter-University Athletic League cross-country championship site, as well as the national cross-country championship site (due to its being the first International Amateur Athletic Federation (I.A.A.F.) certified course on the island; outdoor intramural recreational center—but not just for the university, but for the external community as well.

The Arturo Morales Carrión, the Miguel Meléndez Muñoz, the New Science Building and the Carlos Iñiguez buildings hold a total of 79 classrooms. The classrooms are assigned to each academic department based on the enrollment and class schedules. An assessment of the daily usage of classrooms is used for reassigning classrooms to each academic department (Appendix 3.21). The Miguel Meléndez Muñoz building contains all of the science classrooms and the majority of the research facilities in science. The New Natural Sciences (NNS) building houses 20 state-of-the-art science laboratories and 3 classrooms. As a consequence of the inauguration of the NNS, space in the Miguel Meléndez Muñoz became available, thus increasing the research capacity for professors as well as students who are actively involved in a variety of research initiatives such as RISE, Howard Hughes, and Bioinformatics research.

The Victor M. Pons Library is a five-story building containing both general and specialized collections and two computer centers. An investment of almost \$500,000 was made to improve the air conditioning system and the humidity control of the library, resulting in better maintenance of the bibliographic resources. The Pío Lopez Art Museum is a unique museum, highly praised island-wide, that houses valuable historical collections and provides students of all ages with opportunities to engage with and study art. It has a permanent art collection from the nineteenth and twentieth century from the outstanding Cayey artist Ramón Frade, as well as other important collections of "Carteles" (posters), exhibitions and art pieces. The Ramón Frade Theater has a capacity of 516 persons and sponsors a large number of rich cultural and academic activities for the UPR-Cayey community as well as for the external community. Until the inauguration of the Cayey Municipal Auditorium in 2014, the Ramon Frade Theater was the only auditorium available in the region. The institution also has two smaller theaters with a capacity for approximately 60 students each.

Overall, 42% of the total space in UPR-Cayey is currently dedicated to teaching, research and related academic activities. The non-assignable spaces include houses, hallways/corridors, stairs and stairwells, storage rooms, restrooms and other common spaces, and their large proportion (32%) is mainly due to the 33 housing facilities for professors and student athletes (61,735 square feet). Other houses are being used for special projects such as the Honors Program, the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, and Title V. The UPR-Cayey has 875 parking spaces for students, faculty, and staff.

Evaluation of the current infrastructure helped to identify and prioritize future renewal initiatives. In 2016, the UPR-Cayey submitted a \$7,000,000 proposal to Central Administration for maintenance of buildings, as well as maintenance of the parking area and on-campus faculty housing. The UPR-Cayey is expecting the approval and budget allocation by the Governing Board.

During the last decade, the projects already completed represent a total investment of \$16,168,018.85, which includes the science building, the remodeling of the Chancellor's building, the sub-electrical station, and the museum. In partnership with the Municipality of Cayey, the UPR-Cayey is working toward the construction and upgrade of the sports facilities (2 soccer fields, and the track and field facilities), at an estimated cost of over \$1,500,000.

**Technology and Infrastructure.** The improved technological expertise of the faculty has required a stronger pedagogical emphasis in managing this resource. The Office of Technology for Teaching (OTT) director is appointed with expertise in technological matters of network learning environments, pedagogical research, and software application experience (Appendix 3.22). This has resulted in a much more concerted effort to support faculty to incorporate technology into their academic duties; the UPR-Cayey has installed an open-source course management system (Moodle).

Currently, UPR-Cayey has a highly segmented data traffic network permitting a secure, optimized flow of data information. The current network contains highly sophisticated networking switches and data flow of 1gbs between buildings, thus increasing data flow capacity 10 times over the course of a year. Administratively, this past summer (2016) the central administration completed the implementation of the oracle based University Financial Integrated System (UFIS). The Enterprise Resource Planning system had already implemented the Finance resource system in 2008 yet in 2016 it incorporated the human resource system. In addition, the central administration has also implemented a student information system that was initially developed at the UPR Mayagüez campus. This SIS system called NEXT manages all of the financial aid software as well as student admission using a relative database format. (Appendix 3.23).

***UPR Audited Budget Statements.*** The UPR's financial statements are subject to an annual audit. Over the last ten years, the UPR independent auditors have been Ernst & Young. For financial reporting purposes, the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), as a whole, issues a single set of audited financial statements which includes its eleven (11) campuses: Río Piedras, Mayagüez, Medical Sciences, Cayey, Humacao, Ponce, Bayamón, Aguadilla, Arecibo, Carolina and Utuado; and the Central Administration. Therefore, this campus does not issue audited financial statements separately; the Institution's financial results are presented in the UPR's financial statements.

The UPR's financial statements are generally due by the ninth month following the year-end closure (since they are filed as part of the OMB-133A report). Over the past years, the University was unable to file the audited financial statements on a timely basis. The delays were due to several aspects, but mainly to the implementation of a new accounting system that did not include various relevant modules, making the accounting closing process cumbersome with interfaces coming in from outside systems. The 2014-2015 fiscal year is the last audited financial statement available.

The administrative and support structure of the UPR, consist of a Finance Office on each campus that is responsible for supervising all transactions related to procurement, accounts payable, account receivable, payments and payroll. Therefore, in this decentralized structure, the campus personnel are responsible for all transactions in each campus. In an effort to improve efficiency, the UPR has invested approximately \$82 million in an ERP system (Oracle e-Business). The modules already implemented include General Ledger, accounts payable and purchasing. Currently, the Accounts Receivable, Capital Assets, Payroll, Cash Management, and Billings, among others, are being implemented.

In regards to the financial structure, external auditors recommended a change or reinforcement to the University in its organizational structure to improve monitoring controls over the accounting and financial reporting functions of units. The accounting and financial reporting responsibilities should be centralized, and campuses should respond directly, timely, and efficiently to the Central Administration Finance Director and Comptroller. UPR-Cayey acknowledges the external auditor's recommendation and agrees that by implementing these recommendations, the monitoring of the accounting and financial reporting activities of the University will be reinforced.

Internally UPR goes through the audit performed by the Puerto Rico Comptroller's Office and the internal auditors appointed by the UPR Governing Board. The Puerto Rico Comptroller's Office audits a selection of accounting periods to assess the efficiency of the fiscal operations and administrative processes. The internal auditors periodically evaluate areas such as the consistency of budget allocation with existing policies and procedures related to procurement and pre-intervention (account payable), Procedures Manuals, procurement process and the record of contracts in the Puerto Rico Comptroller's Office. The Chancellor supervises the audit coordinator who is responsible for the compliance of any corrective action plan and the progress of the audit performed.

### **Findings**

The UPR-Cayey prides itself in the accomplishment of a balanced budget during recent years. Also, even during times of fiscal constraint, the UPR-Cayey has been able to maintain institutional effectiveness indicators through the years of fiscal constraints. Therefore, findings are as follows:

1. The UPR-Cayey has been able to maintain and sustain a fiscal policy consistent with its mission and goals.
2. The UPR-Cayey continuously assesses its budget and promptly takes actions that lead to a yearly balanced budget. Previous monitoring reports by the MSCHE commended the UPR-Cayey on how the UPR-Cayey handles the budget (Appendix 3.23)
3. Institutional indicators have remained the same during the last five years. The UPR-Cayey has been able to maintain its admission, retention and graduation rates constant. Also, the institution has been able to successfully and continually assess the effectiveness of its academic programs. (Further discussion in Chapter 5)
4. The continued support of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to the UPR is evident during the last three-year (Appendix 3.24). This support is not expected to drastically decrease in the next three years, even when there is a proposal to reduce the State appropriation by \$ 50,000,000 for the next four years (Appendix 3.26).
5. The UPR expects the Commonwealth's ability to finance the UPR deficits will be severely limited, but as a tradition of the State, it is anticipated that to fund the UPR, the State will reduce the amount of resources that fund other governmental programs.
6. The UPR is acutely aware of the dependency on State appropriations and is continually seeking to complement its revenues by actively providing services (\$67,698) to state and federal agencies as well as applying for grants from federal and state agencies (\$125,335).
7. The UPR-Cayey budget involves some challenges. It is apparent that nearly 90% of the institution's budget is allocated to salary and fringe benefits, leaving a reduced amount for operational expenses.
8. The Institution was successful in some measures, as this self-study will indicate; the Institution was able to maintain its academic efficiency indexes relatively constant.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Since 2006, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has experienced an economic recession that is expected to continue for the next five years; this has been and will be a great challenge to the University of Puerto Rico. As this chapter in the Self-Study Report shows, the UPR-Cayey has been able to sustain a balanced budget without compromising student admission, retention, graduation, academic excellence, and learning outcomes. The UPR-Cayey has benefited from a constant monitoring of its mission and goals.

As a result of the self-study process, the UPR-Cayey will take the following actions:

1. Develop a comprehensive Risk-Assessment Plan that will prepare the UPR-Cayey for an unclear financial stability (2017-18).

2. Pursue a more efficient external funding plan. The UPR-Cayey will increase its role outside the academic community, thus promoting fundraising and fiscal autonomy from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, by collaborative efforts with public and private organizations.
3. Prioritize the recruitment of faculty with a proven track of external funding through federal and local grant agencies. The UPR-Cayey promotes and fosters a policy of recruiting the most qualified faculty for research and teaching. As the UPR and funding agencies forecast of budget reduction increases, the more aggressive the competition for grants will become. Therefore, the UPR-Cayey will emphasize and support new and current faculty with a successful track of obtaining external funding.
4. In accordance with GB Certification 145, 2014-15, (Exhibit 80), the main goal will be effective academic and administrative structure. As the number of qualified faculty and staff, administrators decline, the Administrative Board will lead a restructuring of the academic and administrative offices within the UPR-Cayey without affecting institutional effectiveness.

## CHAPTER 4: ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Standard 10: Faculty – The institution’s instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings – The institution’s educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

Standard 12: General Education – The institution’s curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities – Programs or activities characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet institutional standards.

### Introduction

To accomplish its mission, goals and objectives, The UPR-Cayey has a highly experienced and qualified, faculty responsible in great part for its educational offerings. These offerings show a balance that take into account various levels of rigor, including academic, research (investigative work and publishing), creative work, and community service experiences, among others. In addition, the general education component focuses on content and abilities parting from an interdisciplinary approach which seeks to prepare the student population by enriching their academic experience thus promoting a well-educated and knowledgeable citizen, consistent with the Mission and Goals of the institution. Furthermore, UPR-Cayey offers students the opportunity to participate in a number of educational activities that support the academic, social, and cultural experience.

### FACULTY

The UPR-Cayey has an adequate number of faculty members to fulfill its mission, goals and objectives. It includes a number of nationally and internationally renowned professors. (See Figure 4.1, 2010-2015).

Figure 4.1 *Faculty Profile by Contract Category*

ACADEMIC YEAR	TENURED	TENURED TRACK	NON TENURED TRACK		TOTAL
			FULL TIME	PART TIME	
2010-2011	139	5	32	24	200
2011-2012	131	5	36	33	205
2012-2013	126	7	38	40	211
2013-2014	125	8	44	36	213
2014-2015	119	14	52	32	217
2015-2016	108	20	50	33	211

While the amount of non-tenured faculty has been increasing over the past five years, UPR-Cayey has maintained a consistent and constant number of full time faculty needed to keep its educational offering.

Figure 4.2. *Student to Faculty Ratio during the last 7 years.*

Academic Year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Student enrollment	3830	3631	3550	3696	3816	3687	3707
Total faculty	211	200	205	211	213	217	211
Teaching faculty	191	170	171	180	183	186	180
SFR	20.1	21.4	20.8	20.5	20.9	19.8	20.6
Graduation rate	41	43	44	41	46	43	48
Number of graduates	488	435	413	483	528	512	526

What is very noteworthy is reflected in Figure 4.2. Given the consistent student enrollment from 2009 to 2015 (3,700 student average per year), institutional effectiveness indicators such as Student-to-Faculty Ratio (SFR), have remained steady during the same period. SFR (considering the entire faculty population i.e., librarians, counselors, and institutional researchers) is approximately 18 students per faculty member. When the SFR is compared with the faculty in the classroom ratio (STR), the number is 20 students per faculty member. Moreover, Figure 4.2 provides ample evidence as to the quality of the faculty since graduation rates and the amount of graduates have both increased over this period. UPR-Cayey's graduation rate is currently the third highest on the island among private and public higher education institutions and in comparison to the national median for comparable institutions that rank 40%. <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/school/?243151-University-of-Puerto-Rico-Cayey>

The number of teaching faculty (Fall 2015) is 185, with the following profile: 106 regular (88 tenured and 17 on tenure track), 46 full-time and 33 in part-time positions. UPR-Cayey has experienced dramatic changes in its faculty population over the last decade. In 2005, regular faculty was 81% and temporary positions accounted for the remaining 19%. As of 2015, regular faculty has declined to 57% and temporary professors now account for 43% of all teaching positions.

A key factor to this decline has been fiscal constraints, which have led to a decreased amount of tenured faculty, and the majority with the highest academic rank with 10 or more years of experience. One important fact encountered (according to 2015 data) is that there is a higher percentage of full professors and lower percent of auxiliary professors. This number should change given the recent hiring over the past two years that the current administration has aptly and efficiently budgeted and achieved considering fiscal constraints.

There has been a 28% increase in faculty who hold a doctoral degree or terminal degree from higher education institutions as required and established in Article 42 of the UPR General Bylaws and as stated in the Academic Senate Policy: Certification 24 (AS Certification 24 2015-16) Appendix. This certification entails new institutional and departmental hiring requirements such as a needs assessment study, terminal degree requirement, and research experience. This senate policy assures a competitive faculty committed not only to teaching but research and mentoring as well, since a critical part of the policy requires the faculty candidate to publish as well as seek funding research opportunities and mentor students in research, community service and creative work.

Figure 4.3 *Faculty Preparation*

YEAR	PHD, EdD	MASTERS	OTHERS	TOTAL
2010-2011	111	81	8	200
2011-2012	115	83	7	205
2012-2013	123	82	6	211
2013-2014	126	82	5	213
2014-2015	135	74	8	217
2015-2016	142	67	2	211

Regarding diversity among the faculty, there is an average gender balance, where there are 50 % female professors to 50% male professors between the years of 2010-2015. There has been a stable practice of international scholars representing about 15% of total faculty. (Appendix 4.1)

**Faculty Teaching Load.** The average course load is between 12 and 15 credit hours for tenured and tenure-track faculty, whereas for non-tenured the average is above 15 hours. The academic departments with the highest academic loads are Biology, Mathematics-Physics and Social Sciences.

In some cases, as requested by the faculty member and considering institutional needs, a faculty can exceed 12 teaching credit hours, but it cannot exceed 21 credit hours as certified by the Administrative Board.

Figure 4.5 shows the average load by FTE of tenured and non-tenured by departments.

Figure 4.5 *Teaching Load*

Department	Average Loading By FTE Faculty					
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Business Administration	10.2	10.7	10.2	11.4	10.5	10.3
Biology	12.7	11.9	10.3	10.5	11.0	10.3
Social Sciences	11.8	12.7	12.1	11.9	12.6	14.2
Physical Education	15.8	13.2	10.8	9.5	15.8	17.8
Hispanic Studies	10.9	14.8	9.2	8.7	9.3	9.3
Humanities	12.5	12.4	13.5	13.8	13.4	12.2
English	14.1	15.5	16.3	13.4	13.2	14.6
Mathematics-Physics	10.8	12.9	11.5	11.0	10.5	12.2
Education	14.6	12.7	12.0	9.3	9.3	13.7
Chemistry	9.5	7.6	8.0	8.8	7.9	8.4
Total	11.9	12.1	11.3	11.0	11.1	11.8

**Recruitment and retention of a well-qualified faculty.** The UPR-Cayey guarantees through its recruitment program that each tenured and non-tenured faculty is qualified to fulfill their duties and responsibilities.

Since 2005 during the last accreditation visit, the Academic Senate has been involved in the creation, improvement and implementation of Policies and Procedures regarding the recruitment of qualified faculty. Specifically, the AS Certification 24, 2015-2016, known as "Policies and Procedures for the



recruitment of Qualified Faculty at the UPR”.

This specific policy with contractual letter is used to attract and recruit well- qualified faculty. This policy has been continuously revised and it includes a required annual faculty needs assessment report that is approved by the department tenured faculty. (Appendix 4.2) Furthermore the policy includes a provision where in order to provide support and to comply with the terms and conditions stated in the contractual letter, there is an institutional support system committed to offering the following attractive advantages:

1. Competitive salaries among other higher education institutions in Puerto Rico
2. Full fringe benefit package
3. Incentives (institutional support for professional development, traveling, publication costs, among others)
4. An articulated support system plan consisting of eight sections, as follows:
  1. Recruitment (AS Certification 24, 2015-16)
  2. Contract letter (AS Certification 24, 2015-16)
  3. Start-up Funds
  4. PDP and mentoring - BRAD
  5. Writing Groups
  6. Workshops and Seminars (NIH-BRIC/BRAD)
  7. Incentives and FIDI
  8. Revised evaluation procedures (AS Certification 48, 2015-16)

The new recruitment process has produced encouraging results. 9 out of 11 (82% of participants obtained external funding support to attend 12 summer training programs in prestigious centers or labs; 9 (82%) had 28 peer review publication, submitted or published; all 11 new recruits (100%) offered 37 conferences in academic or international forums; 7 (74%) applied to 13 different grants in 2015-16; 5 (5%) obtained FIDI funds in 2015-16 of for 2016-17; 7 (74%) mentored more than 55 students in research (44 the first semester and 52, the second semester).

UPR-Cayey retains qualified faculty by applying two approaches, -evaluation procedures- using Senate’s Certification 48, 2015-2016 [see appendix 4.3] and by incentive initiatives such as: FIDI funds, additional funds for professional development, publication costs, among others. In addition, Certification 34 also establishes the policy to offer an economic incentive to those professors who submit proposals and are granted external funding.

The Academic Affairs Deanship has the responsibility to ensure the appropriate professional support for the advancement and development of faculty to comply with our goals and objectives. A system that is divided into three (3) phases is implemented where Phase 1 includes the orientation for new recruitment, Phase 2 is geared to all faculties, and Phase 3 is a phase based on competitiveness for those who demonstrate a further development and interest in research areas.

Figure 4.6 provides insight of the institutional support for the advancement and development of faculty at UPR-Cayey.

Figure 4.6 Tenured track *Faculty Institutional Support*

PHASE 1 Orientation	PHASE 2 Professional Development and Educational Projects	PHASE 3 Other Support
Institutional Overview	Professional Development Faculty	Sabbatical leaves
Policies	Workshops and seminars	Release time

Evaluation Review Process	Travel to conferences/seminars	FRN Collaborations
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The UPR General Bylaws Article 45, modified by Certification 160 (GB Certification 160, 2014-2015) describes the evaluation criteria for both tenured and non-tenured faculty. The Academic Senate at UPR-Cayey approved Certification 48 (AS Certification 48 2015-2016) [Appendix 4.4] which determines the institutional faculty evaluation process as a result of the assessment made of policies and procedures to ensure the use of qualified professionals to support the institution’s programs. This process has demonstrated to be pertinent and adequate to ensure that UPR-Cayey has a qualified faculty in all academic areas of our tenured and non-tenured track faculty. Close to 98 percent of the tenured track and non-tenured track faculty score within a Category I (Excellent) and Category II (Good) in the evaluation process. These scores include the evaluation of faculty chair, department personnel committee and the student.

Figure 4.7 *Qualified Faculty*

	Cat. I Excellent (4.0-3.6)	Cat.2 Good (3.59-3.00)	Cat. 3 Regular (2.99-2.40)	Cat. 4 Deficient (2.39-)	Total	1 y 2	3 y 4
2012-13	248	47	15	2	312	94.6%	5.4%
2013-14	260	39	4	3	306	97.7%	2.3%
2014-15	244	58	7	0	309	97.7%	2.3%

**Faculty Evaluation Outcomes 2012-2014.** Tenured faculty is evaluated through procedures that consider both faculty and institutional expectations (Appendix 4.5). Non-tenured faculty is evaluated each academic year by their department peers (personnel committee) department chair and by students using evaluation procedures that emphasize class rigor and learning strategies in the classroom (Appendix 4.6). This evaluation takes place on a yearly basis. Further assessment by the Institutional Personnel Committee, measures and compares each department evaluation against the Institution’s recruitment expectations. The UPR-Cayey Academic Senate assesses periodically, the policies and procedures in order to comply with changing Institutional expectations and needs. As stated above, since 2013-14 the contractual letter also forms part of the evaluation process yet, it became officially an integral part of the evaluation process in 2014-15 (see AS Certification 24, 2014-15)

Tenured track faculty is evaluated for a term of 5 years, until they are granted a final tenured position. In cases of tenured faculty, they are evaluated for purposes of promotion to obtain a higher rank where they can reach Full Professor, the highest rank.

The promotion procedures are described in the UPR Bylaws and the UPR-Cayey AS Certification 48, (2015-2016) as mentioned above. Each year the Human Resources Office qualifies faculty for promotion according to the rank and time served in the faculty member’s current rank. According to the General UPR Bylaws, faculty is ranked as Assistant, Associate and Full Professor. After three years in service, Assistant professors qualify for promotion to Associate Professor. Associate professors qualify for promotion to Full professor after five years in the rank. Each year, The UPR-Cayey Administrative Board sets the required score for promotion within each rank. Once established it is distributed to the

Institutional Faculty Personnel Committee and then communicated to all qualified faculty. However, for the last 6 years, due to budget constraints and cautionary measures the promotions were not granted at the moment of the evaluations and recommendations. At present, in 2016, all the promotions have been granted with an adequate distribution and assignment of the budget for these purposes.

The strong commitment of the UPR-Cayey faculty and its productivity is evidenced by their involvement with the accreditation processes in different areas, such as Business Administration- ACPSB, Pedagogy Department-NCATE, the library-ACRL and the Counseling office. Other areas to be mentioned are curricular revisions for example, (BT Certification 43, 2006-2007, Exhibit 8) a task that is added to their roles and responsibilities in the classroom. Faculty also undergoes mentoring and coaching to students conducting research and for student organizations.

Faculty productivity is also evidenced through the creation of new courses, proposal submission, books, papers, and articles published and the number of conferences and presentations in national and international symposiums or conventions.

### **EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS**

In accordance to the institution's educational mission and Goals, the educational offerings must respond to the current social, economic and cultural needs of its constituency and the institution's academic offerings adhere to the rigor and principles appropriate to its higher education mission. UPR-Cayey offers 27 baccalaureate programs in five academic fields: Education (11 baccalaureate programs), Natural Sciences (4 baccalaureate programs), Social Sciences (4 baccalaureate programs), Humanities (4 baccalaureate programs) and Business Administration (4 baccalaureate programs).

Since the previous Self-study of 2005, the institution has achieved the professional accreditation of 12 academic programs: 4 in elementary education, 3 in special education in secondary education, and 4 in business administration. Among the requirements for these accreditations are programs rigorous revisions and demonstrating that each accredited program yields highly prepared students in the different academic fields. (Appendix 4.7)

Those programs that have no professional accreditation are revised using Certification 43 (Board of Trustees 2006-2007) where the applicability and efficiency is measured and demonstrated in terms of demands, graduation and retention rates. Those reports are evaluated by the Academic Senate, Administrative Board, and the University Board.

Since 2009, eight programs have been revised as shown in the following table. This past academic year 4 programs were revised using the process as established by BT Certificate 43, 2006-07. Last year (2015-16) the Academic Senate evaluated a comparative assessment of all of our 22 programs in terms of graduation rates, retention, admission, number of graduates, and future plans for those that exhibited an index of lower effectiveness.

The library's role in complementing the educational offer is critical and as evidenced, relevant and successful. The library's Collection Development Policy ensures through a series of procedures the updating of collections and their correspondence to present-day social, economic and cultural issues. Educational offerings are strongly supported by the library's collection and databases (Appendix \_). The subjects with the highest percentage of books respond to the needs of the general education courses as well as to those programs with more offerings and student's enrollment.

### **CURRICULAR INITIATIVES**

The strong academic preparation of its faculty coupled with initiatives of curriculum innovation has allowed the UPR-Cayey fulfill its mission of a diverse, balanced and interdisciplinary curriculum, that offers its students variety, flexibility, intellectual stimulation and introduces them to the social problems,

global and local issues affecting them. As a result, Carnegie classifications has reflected these changes since UPR-Cayey has moved from being classified as a *Liberal Arts College* in 2005 to a *Baccalaureate College of Diverse Fields* (2010), to its recent classification (2015) a *Baccalaureate College of Arts & Sciences Focus*.

All curricular decisions and initiatives respond to the UPR-Cayey mission and goals statement of developing an integral, autonomous critical and sensitive student who believes in excellence as a lifelong norm and is ready to become a successful contributor to society and the work force. For this reason, during the last five years (2011-2015), 62 new courses have been developed by various academic departments, which have increased the academic offering. In compliance with GB Certification 69 (2014-15), UPR-Cayey has developed several minors in order to diversify our educational offerings. The minors that are pending approval by the Central Administration are: Mathematics, Theater, History, and Visual Arts. In addition, the professional certification in Physical Education is pending approval (Recreation, Sports Training and Personal Training). (See Appendix \_)

**Research and Community Service.** Research and community service are two core areas of the UPR-Cayey mission statement and are in great measure mediated by our faculty. First, the faculty exemplifies what we expect from our students by the amount of conferences, peer reviewed publications and proposals that have been submitted. Students are readily exposed to these accomplishments through our social media. Yet a much more direct impact is seen in the area of community service since our faculty offer specialized courses that not only address community service theory but also contains a practical component. Such courses are offered in the Education Department, the Honor Study's Program, the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research and the General Education Component. Some examples of these courses are: INTD 3407, TD 4116, PREH 4996, MATE 4997.

**Honor Studies Program.** The Honor Studies Program at the UPR-Cayey from its foundation in 1993 encourages comprehensive and interdisciplinary training that maximizes the qualities that are promoted in every college student. It encourages the development of attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to carry out scientific research. It also stimulates creative, artistic and literary activities; forging a climate that encourages critical thinking, self-directed learning, exploring disciplines outside the field of specialization or major, leadership and commitment to improving society.

The program allows a key segment of its students to have the opportunity to formalize a more rigorous academic experience. Thus, talented students also have the opportunity to develop research projects led by a researcher (faculty), in many instances these projects focus on relevant social issues. The Honor Program success is evident by the number of diverse studies represented in the student's theses. (Exhibit 82)

**Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE).** RISE is a program that seeks to increase the amount of underrepresented students in the biomedical sciences fields that complete Ph.D. degrees. The RISE program continues to transform the academic environment at UPR-Cayey by focusing on the preparation of students to become scientists. These future scientists seek degrees in fields that can help address health disparity needs of the Hispanic population in Puerto Rico and the nation by working to discover the causes and remedies of diseases. Appendix 4.8 shows that the institution is successfully working to reduce the existing gap between underrepresented and non-underrepresented students who complete Ph. D. degrees.

**Howard Hughes Medical Institute.** A recent initiative is the HHMI-supported program, which provides research experiences to future science teachers in the area of microbial ecology. The program also provides an outreach program that seeks to aid the transfer of concept and competencies to precollege students. The outreach program is in coordination with the UPR-Cayey Education Department which enhances the teacher preparation program for science teachers all the while assessing the impact of research experience on the future teacher's understanding of the nature of science, on their academic

performance and their retention in their preparation program.

**Academic Programs and Curriculum Design Aligned to the Institutional Mission, Goals and Objectives.** In keeping with our mission of a diverse, balanced and interdisciplinary curriculum, UPR-Cayey has kept in line with an important systemic level policy that requires every program subject to professional accreditation to achieve its accreditation, and that programs that do not have an external accrediting agency should conduct a self-study process every five years, in accordance with BT Cert. 43 2006-07. This certification has led the institution to achieve accreditation of its academic programs in the areas of Teacher Preparation (NCATE), Business Administration (ACBSP), and revision of twenty other baccalaureate degree programs via BT Certification 43 since 2009.

Accreditation of the UPR-Cayey programs and services guarantees that the programs at the UPR-Cayey reach and surpass national standards of academic excellence, which is an essential part of the institution's mission (AS Certification 89, 2005-06). The results of our alumni on certification exams and bars for Teacher certification (PCMAS), Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and Chemists demonstrate this fact. The high percentage of alumni who gain admission to graduate schools in health-related fields (medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, etc.), and the high percentage whom obtain a terminal degree (Ph.D.) mainly in the areas of STEM (Exhibit 83).

The General Education model at the UPR-Cayey that initiated in 2009 (AS Certification 21, 2008-09), and which is designed to address the contents and abilities that every alumnus should possess upon completion of their degree and dictates the ideal profile of UPR-Cayey alumni. The model includes both core general education courses as well as courses in students' respective majors, particularly a capstone course that comprises the student's overall university experience throughout his/her time at the UPR-Cayey. In this manner, the institution ascertains integrating general education, specialization, and interdisciplinary approaches and academic experience as established in the institutional mission and goals.

The third component of the institution's mission establishes that research and community service are an essential component of the learning-teaching process. AS Certification 49, 2009-10 warrants compliance of the mission because it establishes that every student must sustain and demonstrate having undergone at least one instance of research experience, creative work production, or community service prior to reaching his/her graduating stage. This experience is achieved by integrating such experiences within existing courses and with other research courses that have been developed in areas such as Biology (BIOL 4990), Interdisciplinary courses (INTD 4116), and Chemistry (Quim 4999), and community service and service-learning courses (INTD 3407 and PREH 4996).

The UPR-Cayey organizational structure consisting of nine departments in one faculty under direct supervision of the academic deanship and its dean facilitates program cohesion and alignment with the institutional mission, goals, and objectives. The directors of the nine departments constitute the board of directors, which meets with the academic dean monthly to establish the academic and administrative working agenda. All department curricular work undergoes institutional evaluation by the Institutional Curriculum Committee which has a representative from each academic department as well as a representative from the library, and another from the Counseling & Psychological Professional Services office (CEDE, counselor or psychologist). This committee is responsible for overseeing course syllabi compliance, updating, and revision, that syllabi are oriented toward complying and fulfilling learning outcome objectives, and are aligned with institutional mission, goals, and objectives (AS Certification, 2009-10, Exhibit 84). It also oversees approval (or rejection) of new proposed courses that departments develop and wish to include in their offering; upon approval the new course syllabi is eventually submitted for final approval and coding to Central Administration. At the program level, BT Certification 43 stipulates that every academic program undergoes an evaluation process (self-study) and the results of this study highlight the program's strengths, weaknesses, and development plan (plan of action) to enhance the program for the next five-year period. This self-study and development plan is presented before the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board for approval.

Summarizing the preceding information, the policies established by the Governing Board and Academic Senate in terms of program accreditation, program revision, and format and content of course syllabi (AS Certification 25) and policies regarding research, creative work, and community service (AS Certification 49), and the institution's organizational structure guarantee that the UPR-Cayey's academic programs are consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives as mandated by AS Certification 89, 2005-06.

***Library Learning Resources and Technological Competency.*** The UPR-Cayey faculty integrates the library and other learning resources to promote and develop information literacy skills and technology competencies to students in various ways. Regarding the development of information skills, the Academic Senate endorsed the recommendations of the General Education Committee to include objectives in each General Education course to develop information skills in students. Similarly, Certification 18 (2001-2002), titled *Documento de Habilidades y Contenidos en el Componente de Educación General*, includes the promotion and development of both skills in students.

The General Education Committee prepared an analysis of the syllabi of all general education courses based on the *Association of College and Research Libraries Standards* for 2000, and found that 55% of all courses integrated information literacy skills. These inclusions met the recommendations of MSCHE past reports.

According to the General Education Report (2016) "assessment results evidence that information literacy skills are included in the General Education Model of the institution. In an Exit Survey Analysis of the INTD 3027 Courses, 99% of students indicated that information literacy was integrated in the course. Similarly, in the Questionnaire of Abilities and Content Exit Analysis, 93% of students indicated they developed information literacy skills. This questionnaire was administered to students in their fourth year of study. Accordingly, the UPRC Faculty Survey (2012-13) indicated that 71% of students were knowledgeable in information management abilities" (p.89).

Additionally, the UPR-Cayey's faculty integrates the library usage to their courses when they include informational resources to the syllabus such as books, journals, databases, and the digital reserve services.

The development of information literacy skills, in the institution comprises three different models, i.e. 1) traditional, 2) the librarian as a professor, and 3) professor-librarian. In the traditional model, faculty integrates the development of information literacy skills through the course and in occasions the librarian offers 1 or 2 workshops to develop specific information literacy skills to students. In some occasions assistance to workshops and practice exercises are considered for the class grade (Course Example: INTD 3027- *Un cambio a la vida independiente: plena inclusión – A Change Towards Independent Life-Full Inclusion*)).

In the second model, the librarian works as the professor of the course and is in charge of the development of information literacy skills and the evaluation and grading of students (BIOL 3095). Finally, in the team teaching model both the professor and the librarian are in charge of the instruction and development of information literacy skills. In this model evaluation and grades are given with consensus (QUIM 3006).

In regards to the development technological competencies, the General Education Report (2015) indicates that for 2012-13, UPR-Cayey faculty felt that the higher level of preparation demonstrated by students in that year was technology (76%), followed by information management skills (71%). (Exhibit 85)

## **GENERAL EDUCATION**

General Education (GE) courses are a core component of UPR-Cayey educational offerings. UPR-Cayey has dedicated ample initiatives to guaranteeing that the general education component not only meet the expressed mission and goals but serve as a model for similar initiatives on the island. Compliance with

the offering of these courses incorporated a model that was approved by the Academic Senate via Certification 21, 2007-08. The conceptual foundations of the Model of General Education are rooted in the UPR-Cayey Mission and Goals (AS Certification 89, 2005-06). This model is aligned with the General Education Component's Abilities and Contents document in a manner in which faculty may guarantee compliance with the principles of General Education (AS Certification 18, 2001-02). In addition, the model distinguishes itself by possessing a basic structure for every academic program, 42 credits in General Education courses. The courses faculty offer as part of this model have an interdisciplinary nature and are integrated throughout the student's university career.

Figure 4.9 Contents and Abilities that should be developed in all students (AS Certification 18, 2001-2002)

Abilities	Content
Effective Communication	Puerto Rico
Teamwork	Different cultures
Reflexive, Creative, and Critical Thinking	Environment and Ecology
Information & Technological Literacy	Health
Ability to make sound and just decisions	The Natural World
Awareness of Aesthetics	Technology
Personal Well-being/	
Living in Solidarity	
Mathematical Reasoning	

The General Education program assessment measures student performance in the development of abilities and contents of general education focusing attention on its core courses, interdisciplinary courses, and the capstone experience courses (specialization courses). In this model assessment is conducted for: (1) abilities and capabilities that result from the integration of skills, knowledge, and attitudes, (2) command of content as object of interdisciplinary study, and (3) integral and holistic development that serves to unite the acquisition of abilities and contents. General Education outcomes are evidenced in the pre and post data collected from first time degree seeking students between 2009 and 2015. (Appendix 4.9)

The components of General Education include interdisciplinary courses. In these courses two or more disciplines are interrelated for the purpose of integrating or coordinating their concepts, methods, and outcomes. Logistically these courses could encompass more than one department or institutional area (AS Certification 16, 1992-1993). Currently UPR-Cayey is offering 19 INTD 3027 Courses-Interdisciplinary Seminar. The majority of these courses objectives (more than 90%) are aligned with the abilities of: effective communication, reflexive creative, and critical thinking, as well as computational management. Whereas in less than 20% of these courses objectives the contents of: Health, The Natural World, and Mathematical Reasoning are included. See Appendix 9 for the distribution of INTD 3027 developed by the academic department 2009 to 2013.

The expected INTD 3027 outcomes were met since 85% of students were able to identify two or more separate disciplines. End semester results for INTD 3027 are shown in table 11 of the General Education Report (Exhibit 85).

The Capstone Course has been deemed as the event of closure in the career of UPR-Cayey's students. This event could be a Seminar type course, a thesis, a research, community service or creative project; or a pre-vocational internship. The 27 programs have identified 19 courses as their Capstone. From these eight (42%) are research projects; six (32%) are professional practicums; four (21%) are seminars; and one (5%) a 'capstone' course. Between 2012 and 2014 1819 students have experienced this event. These courses' objectives alignment with the 'Abilities and Contents'- General Education document show uniformity with relationship to the topics offered. 90% of the courses included the abilities of: critical and reflexive thinking; effective communication; and computational management. Whereas the abilities and contents of: the natural world; esthetic appreciation; ecology and the environment; and health were only included in 35% of the courses.

When comparing the General Education common core courses, the INTD 3027 courses, and the Capstone courses in relationship to 'Abilities and Contents' included in their objectives, the results show that the INTD 3027 and Capstone course objectives are equally or better aligned with the general education contents than the common core courses. In terms of the abilities the same pattern emerges when it comes to: living in solidarity; personal well-being; and decision making. This evidences that the fundamental elements of the General Education component are shared by common core; interdisciplinary; and specialty courses, and that they contribute towards the development of the 'Abilities and Contents' that all graduates should acquire. (Appendix 4.10)

## EDUCATIONAL RELATED ACTIVITIES

Most of the UPR-Cayey students come from the ten municipalities surrounding the campus, in the rural central-eastern part of the Island. They have diverse educational backgrounds and multiple academic and personal needs, often reflecting the difficult economic and social environments in which they live. Although most of them have a high standard admission index, in comparison to their peers in other public and private undergraduate institutions in Puerto Rico, many of them come with a proficiency that is below to what is expected for beginning a college-level career. The UPR-Cayey offers coordinated services consistent with its mission and goals, to help these students enrich their lives academically and professionally in order to succeed in achieving their educational goals. In addition, UPR-Cayey offers noncredit developmental and continuing education courses and related educational activities to adults who wish to pursue a sounder or more diverse educational background.

**Summer Pre-College Courses.** UPR-Cayey utilizes the results of the three achievement tests of high school students' College Admission Test (CEEB) to identify students whose proficiency is below college-level in Mathematics, Spanish and English language skills. The scores in these tests are not considered for the calculation of the General Admission Index (GAI); therefore, they are used solely for identifying specific academic preparation needed in these areas and placement in courses at the corresponding level of proficiency. The corresponding academic departments recommend the cutoff of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) test scores, which are then approved by the Academic Senate. This decision is based on an assessment of the basic skills required for the corresponding first year courses and the internal characteristics of each achievement test.

The current cutoff scores are: 650-Math, 500-Spanish, and 450-English (each test score ranges from 200 to 800). Students admitted with scores less than these are required to take non-credit preparatory courses during the summer prior to their first semester in college. The Mathematics course is offered only to Natural Science or Business students. Pre-college course information is offered to all students prior to admission.

The faculty from the corresponding academic departments designs and teaches these preparatory courses every summer. In addition, the department chairs select competent teaching faculty and ensures the availability of appropriate learning resources in order to guarantee the attainment of UPR-Cayey quality standards in these academic offerings.



All administrative procedures for the offering of these courses are handled by the *Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies* (DECEP), under the Dean of Academic Affairs. All preparatory courses include 30 hours of teaching and are geared towards the personal and professional development of underprepared students to help them reinforce, refine or re-learn the basic skills needed to succeed in college. Diagnostic, pre and posttests are given to ensure that course standards are met. In addition, in coordination with the academic departments, DECEP provides a peer-tutoring program for these students.

Pass or Fail grades are assigned in these courses: 75% in English, 80% in Mathematics and Spanish. All these courses have high passing rates: 78.8% for Mathematics, 91.9% for English and 96.8% for Spanish (Appendix 4.11). Students who do not pass any of these courses cannot enroll in the corresponding first year college course. They are required to repeat the preparatory course during the following summer. However, in the case of Mathematics, students who do not pass are required to take the *College Algebra* (MATE 3004) course during the first semester before taking the Pre-calculus course. (The Appendix \_ shows the number of students who took these courses in the past five years).

The UPR-Cayey for more than 35 years had supported a 1,819 through Student Support Service Program ended in 2015. Through this federal grant, freshmen students were provided different opportunities for academic development, assistance with basic college requirements, and counseling to motivate them toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Once admitted as freshmen in the institution qualify for the program, they needed to be first generation, low income or have academic needs. The program provided them with all the necessary support that included remedial course, intensive tutoring sessions and individualized counseling for personal, career, and academic information. They were also exposed to peer- mentoring activities.

Last year the UPR-Cayey was granted a Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program Title V proposal that has helped to continue to improve student services by assisting the students by offering them tutoring and also a more comprehensive mentoring program. This new proposal includes a summer pre-college program that offers remedial courses in Mathematics, English and Spanish, also a mentoring program especially for those students who are admitted with a below college-level skills set. In addition, it includes an early warning system to identify students that do not meet the expected academic performance.

The Counseling Center (CEDE) developed a referral system in which the faculty that identifies any student that presents any special needs is immediately referred to CEDE for services such as professional counseling, tutoring, ADA accommodation or adjustments, among others (Statute 51 (Integral Educative Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Ley ADA), PR-Act 250 (Ley del Pasaporte Post Secundario de Acomodo Razonable, 2012) and UPR-JG Certification 133 (2016-17).

### **Findings**

The Self- Study process has provided us with an encouraging view of our educational offerings and educational activities that we are developing and offering our students; however, there are concerns in the area of Faculty:

1. As of 2015, regular faculty has declined to 57% and temporary professors now account for 43% of all teaching positions. In addition, this results in an overload of committee work for tenured faculty.
2. Recruitment of tenure track faculty has not kept pace with faculty retirement. The number of tenured faculty engaged in the fulfillment of the institutional goals and objectives (teaching, research, community service, and curriculum development) has declined.

3. Student to tenured and tenure-track faculty ratio has slightly increased. Tenured faculty with course overload and administrative responsibilities must now service a larger pool of students.
4. Non-tenure track faculty is expected to teach between 15 and 18 credits per semester. The amount of extra work limits their support to the already overloaded tenured faculty.

## **NEXT STEPS**

During the last decade, the UPR-Cayey has experienced a decrease in the number of tenured faculty mainly due to retirements. The institution has not been able to replace retirees at a similar rate. In order to fulfill its academic offering, the UPR-Cayey has increased the number of qualified full-time and part time non-tenured faculty that are hired. Although these professionals perform according to Institutional expectations, there are several important issues that UPR-Cayey must face in the next few years in order to uphold its mission.

The UPR-Cayey must find ways to reorganize its academic and administrative structures in order to meet the challenges of the next decade. The number of new tenure track faculty, even after having increased in the past two years, will not be able to compensate for the number of tenured faculty that have reached retirement age.

Also the UPR-Cayey must meet student's needs by means of a federal funded Educational Services program for first time degree seeking students. A program that will provide different opportunities for academic development, assistance with basic college requirements, and counseling to motivate them toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Once admitted as freshmen in the institution the requirements will be: to be a first generation student, low income, or have academic needs. The program should provide them with all the necessary support that includes remedial course, intensive tutoring sessions and individualized counseling for personal, career, and academic information. They could also be exposed to peer- mentoring activities.

## CHAPTER 5: STUDENT LIFE

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention – The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and to retain them until their educational goals are reached.

Standard 9: Student Support Services – The institution provides a diverse student body with all the support services necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals.

### Introduction

This chapter presents how the UPR-Cayey implements policies and strategies to admit students whose interest, goals and abilities are congruent with its mission, and the efforts to retain them through the pursuit of the student's educational goals. Furthermore, the chapter describes student support services that enable students to achieve the institution's goal of an interdisciplinary and innovative education by integrating subjects and experiences from various fields of knowledge, research and community service as part of the process of teaching and learning.

### STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION

#### UPR-Cayey Admissions Philosophy and Practices

**Recruitment Strategies.** For the past three years, the UPR system has moved the entire admissions process online. Information regarding application, offerings and expectations for students is readily available online at: [www.upr.edu/admisiones](http://www.upr.edu/admisiones) and in the Admissions Office.

In addition to this System-wide initiative, UPR Cayey has established a regular high school visitation program as a strategy that has yielded excellent results in attracting and accepting highly qualified and committed students (See Exhibit 86). In 2014 the UPR-Cayey hired a full-time administrative assistant to increase the number of visit of schools in our service region to strengthen the promotion of our academic offerings. A very important part of the tasks of this employee is visiting schools in and outside of the service area to promote UPR Cayey.

The university also sponsors annual meetings with school counselors from our service area. Department directors participate and share latest advances as well as information on matters related to admissions processes and services. This way, the process is effectively communicated and transmitted to potential students, directly by the counselor's in charge of assisting students in the schools that comprise the service area.

In 2007, the UPR-Cayey began hosting open houses for prospective students. For the last two years the Deanship of Student Affairs, in collaboration with the Admissions Office, have refined and adjusted strategies so that our Open House is dynamic, fun and informative. The recent Open House activities have included specific stations that demonstrate our student involvement in athletics, research, and the arts. Thus, allowing visiting students a firsthand experience in areas of interest. Stations also include a department chair and student leaders who answer questions regarding educational offerings and related matters. These past two years (2014-2015, 2015-2016) attendance marks were above and beyond expectations (See Exhibit 87). Recently, in collaboration with other units of the UPR system an activity called "EXPO UPR", was implemented as an additional comprehensive outreach model further exposing UPR-Cayey's educational offerings. In addition, some of the academic departments organize conferences, workshops, and guided visits, upon request.

An integral part of our recruitment strategy is including the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office collaborates in various activities by providing prospective student with accurate and comprehensive information and advice regarding financial aid scholarships, grants, loans, and refunds.

**Policies and Procedures.** Students' admissions policies and procedures in the UPR System are uniformly applied among all institutional units and respond to the institution wide mission. BT Certification 25 (2003-2004) is the policy that establishes the criteria for admission to the whole system. New systemic and internal certifications recently have been approved to meet the needs of certain interest groups:

- GB Certification 111, 2014-2015, serves applicants with functional disabilities. This certification is based on Law 250 of 15 September 2012. Under this Certification the UPR-Cayey Senate established AS Certification 60, 2015-2016 to create an evaluation structure for these candidates;
- GB Certification 50, 2014-2015 was established to assist applicants with low socioeconomic status. The Academic Senate of the UPR-Cayey approved AS Certification 61, 2015-2016 with the purpose of creating a practical structure to make possible the evaluation of candidates under this certification.
- AS Certification 59, 2015-2016 was approved by the Academic Senate of UPR-Cayey to address Circular Letter 24 (2015-2016) of the Department of Education (Appendix 5.1). This circular letter authorizes talented eleventh graders to apply and decide to attend college if they meet certain criteria.

The Admissions Office carries out the process throughout the year. The process begins by having the Dean of Academic Affairs certify the available programs and the available spaces at the Central Administration Office of the University of Puerto Rico. This information stems from analysis of variables such as: classroom space, available faculty, and budget (AS Certification 43, 2015-2016). The result of this analysis is referred to as the minimum admission index (IMI) and is applied to all of the 27 academic programs, based on the historical analysis of student performance in terms of graduation and retention rates.

The Admissions Office assists each student individually throughout the process. Applications are evaluated according to the General Application Index (GAI), the IMI, and quotas available for each program. The results of the process (admission or denial) are notified by email and regular mail. Applicants who were denied admission may request reconsideration online <http://www.upr.edu/vicepresidencias/vicepresidencia-de-asuntos-estudiantiles/vicepresidencia-de-asuntos-estudiantiles-oficinas-adscritas/oficina-de-admisiones/>.

The admissions process then begins, with the full understanding of these policies to bring the right information to prospects in schools, open houses, in the "college days", phone calls or office visits and other recruitment activities organized by the institution. In May, the Dean of Student Affairs coordinates a welcome activity for students and their parents where they are guided through the registration processes and the support services available. A survey of the activity that was conducted in May 2016 revealed that 75% of the participants consider that the activity fulfills the expectations and brings useful information for the students and parents.

**Outcomes from the Admission Process.** UPR-Cayey has maintained a steady number of students enrolled in the four areas of study. It has also maintained the percent of female and male students, with twice as many females as male students. Two-thirds of our students come from the University's service area. The institution provides service to students with high financial need (74%), based on the percent of students eligible for financial aid.

Figure 5.1 Profile of First-time degree-seeking students

Characteristics		Total Admitted					
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Area	Business Administration	219	203	222	216	190	221
	Natural Sciences	322	356	405	337	334	353
	Arts	147	132	134	156	132	163
	Pedagogy	122	127	154	215	172	157
	Total Admitted per year	810	818	915	924	828	894
	Freshmen quota per year	821	814	905	826	808	849
Gender	Female	531	515	586	538	508	547
	Male	246	237	307	334	280	279
Geographic Origin	Service area	532	508	617	584	555	585
	Out of service area	245	243	276	288	233	241
	Eligible for Financial Aid		79.09	73.70	72.22	75.5	71.0

Source: UPR-Cayey Assessment Office, Admission Office, Financial Aid Office

Figure 5.2 Annual Distribution of GAI (300+)

Years	Admitted Student	Admitted Students with 300 + GAI	(%)
2008	877	447	51
2010	815	510	63
2011	818	479	59
2012	915	546	60
2013	924	499	54
2014	828	462	56
2015	894	490	55
2016	837	533	64

Using as a benchmark the year 2008, the institution has consistently increased the quality of students admitted. It is important to note that for purposes of the UPR System, that a student with a GAI of 300 points or more is considered a student with a high academic level. This process is aimed to attract the best talent to the UPR-Cayey.

**Transfer Students.** The external transfer process serves student of private universities in Puerto Rico, the United States and abroad. It is a process that takes place biannually, different from the admissions process for applicants from high schools, which is annual. Two dates are set in the academic calendar for this purpose, a regular deadline and a late application date. (Appendix 5.2)

In 2011 the UPR-Cayey established a new certification to regulate transfers (AS Certification 27, 2011-2012, Exhibit 88). This certification includes the definition of transfer, the rules, procedures, general and specific requirements and the rules and procedures for the validation of Credit. In 2016 two amendments

to the certification were approved, one at the request of the Department of Mathematics and Physics (AS Certification 53, 2015-15) and the other from the Department of Natural Sciences (AS Certification 82, 2015-16). Information on the process and requirements is published on the website: <http://cayey.upr.edu/oficina-de-admisiones/trasferencias/>.

## Academic Success

**Student Retention and Graduation Rates.** Student academic success is measured considering the student retention rates among first-year students, and graduation rates. In addition, UPR-Cayey monitors the student graduation rates and evaluates the institutional strategies to retain the students through the pursuit of the student educational goals. To determine institutional graduation rates, cohorts are tracked:

Figure 5.3 Distributions of Graduation and Retentions Rates

RATES	2010-11 cohort 2009	2011-12 cohort 2010	2012-13 cohort 2011	2013-14 cohort 2012	2014-15 cohort 2013
Retention Rates	84.8	84.2	88.1	97	97
Graduation Rates	42.0	43.0	41.0	46.4	43.1

Source: Source: Vice President of Academic Affairs-Central Administration; IPEDS Data Center

The following table presents benchmark data about graduations rates related to other UPR campuses, which offer academic programs at the undergraduate level.

Figure 5.4 UPR System Graduation Rates

UPR UNITS	2010-11 cohort 2009	2011-12 cohort 2010	2012-13 cohort 2011	2013-14 cohort 2012	2014-15 cohort 2013	%
Río Piedras	48.4	53.4	47.0	47.5	47.0	48.7
Mayagüez	44.0	42.0	44.0	42.8	41.0	47.1
Cayey	42.0	43.0	41.0	46.4	43.1	43.1
Humacao	46.0	48.0	48.0	43.4	44.0	47.2
Aguadilla	39.0	33.0	37.0	32.1	34.0	38.8
Arecibo	26.0	34.0	45.0	40.0	39.0	37.0
Bayamón	35.0	35.0	38.0	39.2	35.0	33.2
Carolina	35.0	41.0	38.0	33.3	36.0	36.7
Ponce	42.0	38.0	44.0	40.7	38.0	38.9
Utado	28.0	25.0	14.0	17.5	18.0	25.1
Total	38.5	39.2	39.6	38.3	37.5	39.5

Source: Vice President of Academic Affairs-Central Administration; IPEDS Data Center

***Social and Personal Integration.*** Every year the UPR-Cayey Administration (Chancellor, Deans and Directors) holds the Welcome Day for incoming students and their parents. Both populations participate in many activities and orientations that serve them to start their first year with the essential information for transitioning from high school to college. Parents have the opportunity to participate in group orientations and conferences from the Registrar's Office, Counseling and Psychological Center, Safety and Security, Financial Aid, among others. Participation, competition and recreation are an important part of a student's college experience. An average of 65% of the freshmen class participates annually in the first time degree seeking students and Parents Welcome Orientation Activity.

***At Risk Students.*** UPR-Cayey provides programs and services to ensure that admitted students who marginally meet or do not meet the institution's qualifications achieve expected learning goals and educational outcomes before they graduate as is explained below.

***Student Support Center.*** This program has been at UPR-Cayey for more than 30 years and served as a primary support services for students at risk in their transition and adjustment to college. First identified from the Single Application Form (Admissions Office) the SSC (CAE for its Spanish acronym) used four criteria to determine the student's qualification for this program: the student is college level first generation, qualified for remedial courses in Math, English and Spanish, belongs to a low-income family, and has a diagnosed disability. This program helped students with vocational, personal counseling, tutoring and peer mentoring. It also made referrals for psychological and crisis interventions to the counseling and psychological services center.

In order to increase student support services the Dean of Academic Affairs together with the Institutional Retention committee, submitted a Title V (2015-2020) grant proposal aimed to work on four components to improve institutional retention. Activity three of this proposal includes three major activities: the use of a supplemental instruction model in courses with high dropout rates and the establishment of a process of real-time monitoring academic progress, and a referral system coordinated with support services including peer and faculty mentoring, counseling (academic, vocational and personal) and psychological services.

***Academic Progress.*** Students who don't qualify for the SSC program are identified by the Registrar's office annually and referred for counseling services to CEDE. Each student receives a notification of academic progress and a referral to counseling and psychological services. Between 2012 and 2016, 651 students were identified by the Registrar's Office and the Office of Financial Aid because they did not meet adequate academic progress standards. Of these 92% (496 students) attended counseling and 99% came between one and five times to discuss counseling career goals, to improve study habits and time management.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

UPR-Cayey promotes the comprehensive development of its students through a variety of support services and activities that reinforce classroom-learning experiences and enable students to achieve their professional and personal growth. These services are divided in two categories: Academic Support Services, which help students reach their academic goals and the Support Services in Students Affairs, which gives them the tools for the attainment of their professional and personal achievements. These efforts are complemented with extracurricular activities that help develop a pleasant learning environment, student integration to university life and provide a sense of belonging.

***Academic Support Services.*** Academic support services are directly related to retention strategies. Through these services the students receive the necessary support to achieve their academic goals. Below is a detailed description of the services that are available.

**Registrar's Office.** The Registrar's Office administers and enforces regulations and academic standards approved by university bodies and the Dean of Academic Affairs. It is responsible for the custody of all academic records of students who enroll at the UPR-Cayey. The Registrar protects and preserves student records in compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) of 1974. (Exhibit 89).

**DECEP.** The Continued Education Office is in charge of offering remedial courses in the areas of Spanish, English and Math for students who need to reach the expected level of achievement to enroll in the first year core courses. It also offers the Talented Students Program for high school students on Saturdays offering Humanities 1 through 4 courses, Social Sciences 1 and 2, and the History of Puerto Rico Compendium. This allows high school students to obtain college credits.

**Student Support Center (CAE).** The Student Support Center (CAE for its Spanish acronym) offers a peer mentoring program together with mentor professors of Natural Sciences and Mathematics offering tutoring in different subjects such as Organic Chemistry I - II, Analytical Chemistry, General Chemistry I - II, Biochemistry, Pre-calculus I - II, Calculus I -II, Pre-calculus with Experiment I - II, Mathematics, Physics I - II, Biology I - II, Botany, Zoology, Genetics, English, and Spanish. It is an experience of students helping students to support academic development and language skills through collaborative and social teamwork. The program works in coordination with professors of various subjects to have consistency between the topics studied in class and the formal mentoring program. Other experts support the CAE in areas, such as Counseling, Education, Library Services, Technology and Communication (See Exhibit CAE Annual Summary).

**Title V Project.** Title V's Project absolute priority is to integrate comprehensive activities designed to increase the number and proportion of high-need students who are academically prepared for, enroll in, or complete college degrees on time. These strategies are designed to help retain students and move the students in a timely manner into core courses and through program completion. The activities are designed to: increase the number of high need students in high schools entering into college, increase retention and graduation rate of college high need students by providing tutoring, mentoring, academic advisement, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative and customized instruction courses (including remedial Math, Science and Spanish).

Activity 1: Academic advisement, tutoring, and college entrance exam preparation workshops for high need students in UPR-Cayey feeder high schools. The proposed activity will increase the academic performance and the college entrance exam scores of incoming freshmen increasing their academic potential and thus, their on-time graduation rate.

Activity 2: High need college freshmen student developmental summer bridge program. High need students needing remedial courses based on their college entrance exam scores. This activity is designed to increase their academic performance and course completion rate during their first-time degree year experience.

Activity 3: Supplemental Instruction (tutoring and mentoring) for high need students enrolled in general education courses. Students not performing in their courses will be identified on real-time through an Academic Analytics Dashboard System (AADS) and referred to tutoring and mentoring for preventing course failure. Due to the low retention rate, the availability of senior year courses sections cannot be offered/programmed due to low enrollment. This impacts the time it takes students to complete the degree and in many cases they transfer to other institutions to complete their degrees representing a loss for the institution.

Activity 4: Development of senior year (traditionally low enrollment) on-line courses. Even though the implementation of the AADS will be part of Activity 3, it will provide on-line, on-demand student performance information for the successful implementation of Activities 2 and 4 contributing to enhance



the institutional capabilities for implementing proactive services with its early alert, early and continuous tracking and monitoring of interventions. The AADS will track high need students and cohorts throughout college, record and document inquiries, services and interventions.

**Support Services in Students Affairs.** UPR-Cayey is committed to the overall development of students, both intellectually and personally, in accordance with the student profile described in the institution's mission. Towards this end, support services complement the academic activities with student support services and extracurricular activities to facilitate their integration into university life, encourage the spirit of *Alma Mater* and provide for maximum development of the potential of each student.

**Financial Aid.** UPR-Cayey offers a comprehensive program of economic assistance for the purpose of providing equal opportunity for higher education to students with limited financial resources. This program has funds from funding allocations of the Government of Puerto Rico, allocations from the federal government and contributions from individual entities. These funds are managed according to the regulations established by the granting entities.

Figure 5.5 Sources of Financial Aid

Source	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Pell Grant	13,013,639	12,627,027	12,985,412	12,650,199	12,884,491
Legislative Grant	714,404	715,004.00	792,560	814,412	186,022
SEOG Grant	179,929	179,704	177,384	189,400	268,012
Work & Study	485,480	485,438	478,678	483,738	403,408
Direct Loans	837,564	568,097	398,335	435,541	423,419
Total amount of Financial Aid	15,231,016	1,457,427	14,832,369	14,573,290	14,165,352
% Total financial aid coming from Pell Grants	85.44	86.63	87.54	86.80	90.95
% Students receiving Financial Aid	79.09	73.70%	72.22%	75.00%	71.00%

Source: Financial Aid Office

Access to financial aid information is provided through group guidance to students and parents in institutional activities, such as open houses, welcoming activities to new students, as well as activities of the UPR System: Guidance for high school counselors, *UPR goes to Plaza* and UPR EXPO. Efforts to communicate information to students include an email account: [asistencia.economica@bulkmail.upr.edu](mailto:asistencia.economica@bulkmail.upr.edu) for mass mailing. The Financial Aid Office has eight computer stations with tutorials that explain the detailed processes that facilitate access to financial aid. During the academic year 2015-2016 the Office conducted activities to explain new processes in relation to the FAFSA in the Student Center and offered promotional material to participants.

**Guidance, counseling, psychological services and reasonable accommodation.** The Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CEDE for its Spanish acronym) plays an important role in helping students to adapt to college life and to be successful academically. Since 2012 the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) has accredited the Center. Our mental health professionals

offer personal, academic, and vocational counseling/psychotherapy, and a variety of outreach activities, consultation and crisis intervention to impact the students' quality of life. The purpose is to support students through preventive, developing, and remedial processes in their personal life and vocational planning. The Program Services for Students with Disabilities and the Quality of Life Program, in addition to the mental health services, are two main components of CEDE's services to the student community. In these programs the students receive specific services to support them in their academic life.

Figure 5.6 Services provided by CEDE

	Type of Service	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Individual Counseling and Psychological Services	Personal Counseling and psychotherapy	808	965	1,007	856
	Vocational Counseling	707	844	880	749
	Educational Counseling	505	603	629	535
	Crisis Intervention	95	129	88	98
PSEI	Reasonable Accommodations intake and follow up	397	529	382	335

About 50% of students who received services in CEDE report going through voluntary self-referrals. However, other members of the university community refer about 20% of students, and peers refer about 30%. In the last academic year (2015-2016), our center assessed student satisfaction through an online survey (See Exhibit 90). From a population of (N=37), 59% of the students were between 18-20 years old, and 83% were female. In addition, 65% were sophomore and 24% were first year students. Mainly 59% received services for personal issues. The CEDE administrative personnel alternate their lunch period, thus providing flexibility and availability of personnel during the lunch hour. By using this system, the Center has never had to implement a waiting list.

**Health Services.** The *Health Service Office* serves and cares for the physical health of students. It has direct access to nearby hospitals and emergency rooms. The office provides ambulatory and first-aid services for all students regardless of their health plan. If necessary, a patient can be referred to a specialist, laboratories, radiologic studies and hospitals. The office complies with all regulations required by HIPAA Privacy Law (See Exhibit 91). During the academic year 2015-2016, health services were offered to 8,820 students (See Exhibit 92). A survey conducted in 2012 revealed that 59% of students are very satisfied with the services and 98% recommends it. Between 74% and 91% of the students have satisfactory perceptions of services, such as: courtesy, reception, waiting time, document management, over the counter medication, medical consultations, and visits to the nurse (See Exhibit 93).

**Student Organizations.** The Student Organizations Office serves as a facilitator for the academic, professional and personal development of the members of the different organizations in the areas of natural sciences, social sciences, business, education, arts, social interest, and others. Our goal is to encourage students to participate in organizations of their interest, to develop leadership abilities, social responsibility, teamwork and commitment with the UPR-Cayey's mission. Student organizations represent an opportunity to expand academic knowledge. Many organizations are related to professional associations that expand the academic offer exposing them to specialized areas within the area of interest. In the last five years there has been a growth of student organizations. In the academic year 2015-2016, 34% of the enrolled students belonged to a student organization. Student organizations are a very important component of the University's commitment to social justice.

Figure 5.7 Profile of Accredited Organizations

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of accredited associations	45	54	53
Accredited Members	1,256	1,158	1,266
Enrolled Students-UPR-Cayey	3,816	3,687	3,707
Accredited Members/Enrolled Students	32%	31%	34%
Arts	27	34	33
Business Administration	6	5	5
Education	3	3	3
Natural Sciences	9	12	12

Source: Student Organizations' Office

To achieve the institutional goals, the office organizes membership meetings, workshops, and other activities that promote healthy competition and interrelation between the organizations. As part of the action plan to recruit members, we organize recruitment fairs targeting first-time degree students so they can have the opportunity to meet the diverse organizations on campus contributing to the integration of students to campus life (See Exhibit 94). They promote their activities throughout the Institution's official e-mail system, the office website (Facebook and Twitter), the Institutional official website and TV monitors located at the Student Center, and their own social media groups. One of the achievements of the office was the inauguration in 2014 of the Student Organizations Meeting Room. This addresses the need for spaces dedicated exclusively for the students. It is available after business hours.

To evaluate the Student Organizations' Office, several instruments and assessment strategies are used. In the academic year 2015-2016 an online survey of satisfaction was administered to the student organizations' presidents. The findings were that most of the participants were very satisfied with the services provided by the staff of the office. (Appendix 5.3) The office also facilitated a focus group composed of a student representative from each academic area. A questionnaire was administered to determine their interest in the development of skills as leaders. The findings were that they were interested in receiving skills in teamwork and professional growth. They were also interested in being more participative in the coordination of institutional activities (Appendix 5.4).

**Social and Cultural Activities.** The Office of Social and Cultural Activities offer a diverse program of activities that make possible and contribute to the academic formation and cultural development of the student. Compared to 2010-2011 academic year, the number of activities coordinated and sponsored has doubled. More than 70 activities were conducted during the 2015-2016 academic year, including: conferences, theater plays, concerts, book presentations, among others. (Distribution of Activities, 2010-2015, Appendix 5.5)

To ensure an effective promotion each activity is announced by the institution email, web page, and social networks. In addition, we post on the student center TV, on bulletin boards and banners.

**Study Abroad.** The Exchange and International Studies Office facilitate and coordinate exchange studies to national and international accredited universities for all students that comply with the requirements needed. Students will be exposed to other educational system, as well as diverse cultural, language and life experiences that are vital for a better perspective of the world. In the past five years, 204 students have participated in the exchange program in different foreign and national universities. (See Exhibit 95)

The Institution has two educational consortiums and 27 exchange agreements, where 23 are with foreign universities (See Exhibit 96). The number of students impacted by these agreements during the 2015-2016 academic year were: 35, of which 49% belonged to the Natural Sciences Department and 69% of

them participated in one of the educational consortiums of universities of the United States or Canada, and 77% of the participants were females (See Exhibit 97). In the past year the Program has been working on establishing a quicker method of accrediting classes facilitating the process for the students' well-being (See Exhibit 98).

**Athletic Program.** To fulfill its mission, the athletic program is overseen by an athletic director, three physical education assistants, one administrative assistant, as well as sixteen coaches and one-part time athletic trainer. Our student-athlete population is comprised of 215 students that participate in 14 disciplines within the Intercollegiate Athletic League (LAI). To be eligible to participate in any varsity athletic event, the athletes must meet all eligibility criteria as established in the General Regulations of the Intercollegiate Athletic League, as described in the General Regulation of the Intercollegiate League of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Island as amended February 5, 2016, in addition to meeting academic and disciplinary requirements of the institution. The athletes who meet all program eligibility requirements and academic requirements are eligible for the following grants: tuition waiver in accordance with Certification 50-2011-2012, lunch tickets, and lunch or dinner support when they leave campus to compete.

Over the past two years the Deanship of Student Affairs and the Athletic Program has redirected its efforts to improve conditions for athletes to motivate and improve their performance both on the court and within the university population. As a result, athletes have improved their performance by winning silver medals in Taekwondo, silver and gold medals in weightlifting cross country and athletics. Our female soccer team finished in the fourth position in the LAI championship, as did the male Softball team. In addition, we have achieved third place in the commission cup, a LAI competition for institutions that have less than 6,000 students. Our Campus has been selected by the Interuniversity Athletic League (LAI) as the permanent headquarters of the cross-country championship. Campus athletes have played an active role in academic activities, such as open houses where they set up several areas where they demonstrate their different sports disciplines.

In order to measure and evaluate the performance of athletes and the Athletic Program, several assessment tools are given to athletes to assess the coaches' performance and the programs development. The results showed that 82% are satisfied with the performance of coaches and 68.2% with the Athletic Program. In addition, the rehabilitation center was visited by 64 athletes during the academic year 2015-2016, which represent 30% of all athletes. (See Exhibit 96)

**Student Complaints and Grievances.** The Student's Ombudsperson Office was established in 1996 to attend students' complaints regarding the services offered by UPR-Cayey. It promotes accessible, non-adversarial, confidential and independent forum for conflict resolution and consultation. The Office also disseminates information about the rights and duties to the student body. BT Certification 32, 2005-2006 (Exhibit 96) and GB Certification 119, 2014-2015 (Exhibit 97) of the University of Puerto Rico established official policies for the Ombudsperson's Office for all the campuses of the UPR. The following figure summarizes the cases processed by the office between the academic years 2013-2016:

Figure 5.8 Grievances

Type of Complaint	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Academic	72	63	95
Student related	13	44	20
Administrative	4	28	21
Other	5	9	11
Total	94	144	147
Enrolled students/Cases processed	3,816 / 2%	3,687 / 4%	3,703 / 4%

Source: Student's Ombudsman Office Annual Summary 2016

In the last three years, there have been few substantial changes in the variety of cases seen. The number of cases processed in the last two years has been constant. However, a decrease in cases of administrative type and interpersonal controversies is observed. On the other hand, a slight increase is observed in the number of academic claims, consultations, among others. We understand that this is related to the campaign of guidelines and improvements resulting in increased confidence in the Office's services. A survey conducted during the academic year 2015-2016 revealed that 85% considered that the assistance of the Ombudsman's is excellent (See the survey in Exhibit 98).

**Student Representation.** The General Student Council (CGE in its Spanish acronym) provides a space where students can present recommendations, proposals, complaints and request information about the institution. The Council follows the functions enumerated on the Student Regulations UPR-Cayey, the General Student Regulations, the Rules of Procedure of the General Council of Students and the University Act. Over the past years the Council brought concerns about representation in the Senate. The result was the integration of two student senators in order to have more representation in the deliberative body (GB Certification 73, 2013-2014).

The Council works together with the Office of Planning and Assessment in creating surveys of services to students in the various departments at the university. As a result of this process there are some concrete examples of the outcomes. For example, the proposal for the use of space known as the *Sala C* was submitted to the Dean of Students Affairs in February 2015. The results revealed that 85% of students thought that the space did not provide the necessary physical resources they needed. They recommended increasing the number of microwave ovens to heat food, tables, chairs and Wi-Fi service. By the beginning of the first semester of the academic year 2016-17, five additional microwave ovens (out of three), in addition to more lighting and tables and chairs, were identified as improvements in the area according to the needs of students submitted by the Council. In the 2015-2016 academic years various student representatives met with the director of the Library to present the results of a survey conducted last year (2014-2015) on the services offered by the university library (See Exhibit 99). The purpose of the survey was to improve the services and extend library schedule during the final exams period. During the final exams period (December and May) of the 2015-2016 academic year the Library incorporated an extension of the service timetable following the request made by the students.

**Institutional Identity: Alma Mater.** The Office of the Dean of Students Affairs coordinates most of the institutional activities aimed to recruiting and retention of students, the development of the sense of belonging and *Alma Mater*. Activities, such as open houses, in collaboration with the Admission Office, farewell to graduating classes, welcome to new students, among other social activities contribute to achieve the institutional mission.

In the past two year the deanship has consistently used the symbols representing the UPR-Cayey, such as the official seal, its official colors red, white and green; the UPR-Cayey mascot CUCO, the Tricolor Bull image, and the Solar Clock. In official activities they receive free t-shirts where the CUCO image and institutional colors stand out. The institutional colors on the uniforms of student athletes are represented. Since 2015 farewell activities of the graduating class and the graduation activities are evaluated (See Exhibit). These assessments resulted in the integration of the honor medals *cum laude* and *magna cum laude* and distinctive tassels, where the seal are distinguished, the institutional colors and the Solar Clock. In addition, UPR-Cayey made official the academic attire through AS Certification 8, 2016-2017.

We surveyed the farewell activities of the graduating class for the past two years (2015 and 2016) and it revealed that over 70% considered the information provided was excellent. In relation to graduation day, the survey reveals that 69% considered the overall organization of the activity to be excellent vs. 48% in 2015, the awarding of diplomas was considered excellent 73% vs. 32% in 2015, and over 69% considered the traffic coordination and safety, as excellent (See Exhibit 100). Other activities such as welcoming of new students (*Getting to Know my Alma Mater*) revealed that 78% considered that the

activity met their expectations. All these efforts have helped to reaffirm student identity as Toritos and Toritas of UPR-Cayey.

**Artistic Institutional Groups.** The institution stands out artistically through student participation in the Concert Band and the Choir of the UPR-Cayey in official activities within and outside the campus. These groups are an alternative for talented students who want direct experiences with the art of music.

The Choir is composed of 68 students and has participated in local, national, and international activities, such as: Festival Voces de Altura (Quito, Ecuador 2015), Edición 37<sup>ma</sup> del Festival: El Canto Coral Hermana a los Pueblos (Guayaquil, Ecuador), XV Festival Coral de Medellín José María Bravo Márquez (Colombia, julio 2015), XV Festival La UPR Canta en el Teatro de la UPR en Río Piedras (May 2015), in addition, they collaborate with the Concert Choir of UPR Arecibo and Medical Sciences to participate in the concert series *Entre voces al Alma Mater*, with presentations at the prestigious Pablo Casals Symphony Hall in San Juan, and the *Festival de Navidad*, respectively. The Choir has been recognized by the media and public figures in Puerto Rico for their career and artistic performance.

The Concert Band is composed of 64 musicians, which are also part of other music groups, such as Conjunto de Metales, Conjunto de Cañas y Batucada, and a color guard group. They have participated with local groups, such as Junte de Bandas Escolares from the public education system to promote music programs and to motivate and encourage them to fill out the application for admission to the UPR-Cayey. The Band also presents the Christmas and spring concerts, Justas LAI, Graduation, and UPR-Cayey activities. Their performance quality has been highly praised by both the university community and the general community. They have performed with the most outstanding vocalists of Puerto Rico.

**Bookstore and Cafeteria Services.** UPR-Cayey recognized the need to provide cafeteria and bookstore services to its students, in part because of the geographical location of the campus and in part because it is a necessary component of university life. The services are provided by contractors who submitted proposals via auction, as is mandated by the Government of Puerto Rico.

The cafeteria services are offered by FAFSA Food Services, with a varied selection of food. Their schedule provides nourishment between the hours of 7:00 am and 5:30 pm, Monday through Thursday, and Friday from 7:00 am to 4:30 pm. If there are special activities over the weekend, the cafeteria services may be directly contacted and working hours are set up for this purpose.

The bookstore works in coordination with academic departments in order to supply textbook and class manuals readily on campus. The provider is Norberto González, a bookstore that also caters to the off-campus UPR Río Piedras community. Their working hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and on the two first weeks of class they are open on Saturdays.

**Safety and Security.** The Security Office of the University offers 24- hour security to the campus, as well as directing traffic and handling safety and security emergencies. Their protocol for handling emergencies, mitigating crime and ensuring a safe campus to all constituents and visitors is available on the University website: <http://cayey.upr.edu/decanato-de-administracion/oficinaseguridadyvigilancia/>. The mission and vision statements of the Security Office express their commitment to the wellbeing of all constituents of the university in matters of safety, security and respect for harmonious co-existence on campus.

**Qualification of Student Services Staff.** A total of 32 full time professionals provide direct student support services at UPR-Cayey. More than xx% of these personnel have xx years of experience and they are fully qualified for their respective duties. A full 37.5% of these employees hold a Bachelor's degree, 18.7% have earned a Master's degree, and 28% a doctoral degree in their area of expertise. Other degrees and certifications represent 15.6%.

## Findings

In evaluating the coordinated work of the initiatives under the Deanship of Student Affairs, Admissions and personnel in charge of Retention, there is a continued commitment to attracting students from the region, providing opportunities for success to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and striving to integrate diverse styles of learning. After conducting the Self-study we recognize that:

1. We have a vibrant representation of students in university activities that is reflected in the participation of athletes in the sports offered, in the more than 50 student organizations where at least 34% of our student population participate, and the inclusion of the Student Council in the deliberative bodies: the Academic Senate, the Governing Board and in the Academic Departments.
2. We observe a continuous increase in the sense of identity of the institution. The escalating *alma mater* spirit is observed in the increase of the use of the symbols that identify UPR-Cayey, in the attendance in university activities, and in the satisfaction survey of graduates. (See Appendix 5.6).

## Next Steps

In order to guarantee excellent support services, we must continue to work on the instruments used by the student council for an assessment-based culture of improved services for students throughout the campus.

## CHAPTER 6: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

STANDARD 7: Institutional Assessment -The Institution's assessment process has been in constant development in order to evaluate its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

STANDARD 14: Assessment of Student Learning- Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate point, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

### Introduction

The UPR-Cayey has made significant progress developing a comprehensive assessment structure and cycle that enhances the teaching and learning process. Our assessment culture fosters the continuous evaluation and revision of academic, administrative programs, and student support services. The resulting Institutional effectiveness and quality is evidenced through our continued accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), recognition by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and our license to operate within the state, granted by the Puerto Rico Commission on Higher Education (PRCHE).

The UPR-Cayey ranks 8<sup>th</sup> among the Top 50 Institutions of Origin for Female Hispanic or Latino Science Doctorate Recipients between 2010-2014, and 18th among the top 55 institutions awarding baccalaureates in Science to doctorate recipients between 2010-2014, thus evidencing its excellence in Science according to the 2016 *National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates*. Similarly, the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) further evidences excellence in the quality of student services through the professional accreditation. (See Exhibit 101).

***Institution's Overall Effectiveness.*** In 2010, through its Periodic Review Report, and in 2011, through its Monitoring Report to the MSCHE, the UPR-Cayey evidenced that it had developed and implemented a revamped Institutional Assessment Process that continuously evaluates the institution's overall effectiveness in achieving its mission, goals, and objectives, along with its compliance with the MSCHE Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards for Accreditation. The process relied primarily on the following documents included in the institution's exhibits:

*UPR-Cayey Declaration of Mission, Goals and Objectives (2006):* Establishes the institution's four Key Goals (1. Excellence in Undergraduate Programs; 2. Campus Commitment to Performance Excellence; 3. Campus as a Primary Center of Academic and Cultural Activities; 4. Social Responsibility) and sets student learning as the primary center of institutional effectiveness, while guiding strategic planning.

*UPR-Cayey Strategic Plan 2006-2016:* Sets the stage for accomplishing the institutional mission, defining and identifying priorities, emblematic projects, critical assessment areas and the strategies to be employed as part of the Institutional Assessment Process.

*Ten for the Decade 2006–2016: An Agenda for Planning:* Is intended as a roadmap for planning to be carried out within the university system between 2006-2016; it is also meant to define the areas of institutional performance that will be the object of evaluation. For ease of use among units, its objectives were organized under seven Operational Lines (LO) under which the UPR-Cayey Planning and Budget Process is organized, as well as its triennial *Institutional Achievements and Challenges Report* (see Exhibits 102).



*2002 Institutional Assessment Plan* (Exhibit 102): Provides the theoretical underpinnings for the UPR-Cayey current Institutional Assessment Process, which has evolved as a result of the assessment of its effectiveness.

*Institutional Assessment Roadmap* (2007; see Appendix 6.1): Developed as a result of the need to routinely update the institution’s assessment processes for increased effectiveness and renewal. It has been used to explain assessment processes at all levels of the institution and guides: (1) the establishment of clearly articulated goals; (2) the design of strategic initiatives and activities to achieve those goals; (3) the development and implementation of measures to assess initiative effectiveness; (4) the use of data-driven decision-making for budget, planning, and resource allocation geared at institutional effectiveness and enhanced student learning and integral formation.

Accordingly, the institutional assessment roadmap is commonly referred to as the UPR-Cayey Institutional Assessment Plan. The UPR-Cayey has been able to implement a simple, yet cost-effective framework by adhering to the Institutional Assessment Roadmap. This also guarantees that all campus constituents understand and participate in assessment processes, particularly department heads and institutional leadership. It has been extensively discussed in meetings, professional development activities and is readily available online. By promoting these activities, the UPR-Cayey has achieved an assessment culture where there is thorough understanding that assessment results serve as the basis for ensuring that institutional resources work in an integrated manner for the attainment of systemic, institutional, and programmatic goals, prioritizing student learning as the forefront of all institutional activities, while at the same time guiding budgeting, planning, and resource allocation at the institutional level and in all departments and offices.

The aforementioned documents, collectively referred to as the —Institutional Assessment Plan, represent a living, fluid, organized collection of resources that are routinely updated as the institution’s assessment processes evolve. This plan has provided the institution with a simple, yet cost-effective framework through which all campus constituents understand and participate in assessment processes.

***Institutional Assessment Plan.*** The UPR-Cayey has established an outcomes-driven assessment program. The UPR-Cayey began conducting assessment activities and collecting assessment data in 2002 (AS Certification 26:2002-03). As the number of assessment activities increased, particularly with regard to student learning, the UPR-Cayey found the need to establish and maintain an assessment plan. The Institutional Assessment Plan is a systematic approach based on the mission statement and the goals and objectives documents of the UPR-Cayey (AS Certification 89, 2005, Exhibit 103).

The UPR-Cayey Institutional Assessment Plan is supported by administrative structures, along with institutional committees designed for this purpose. The following table describes the administrative structure and their responsibilities.

Figure 6.1 Administrative Structure for the Assessment Plan Process

Administrative Structure	Responsibilities
Assessment and Institutional Research Office (AIRO)	Primary responsibility is supporting and overseeing the implementation of the Institutional Assessment Plan. Provide guidance for complying with programmatic review processes and accreditation initiatives; oversee that assessment initiative are in place to measure achievement of student learning

	outcomes; share best practices and offer peer support on moving forward with assessment initiatives for improving the teaching learning process.
Chancellor's Executive Staff	Chancellor's assistants, deans, Director of Planning and Assessment Budget Director: Ensure collaboration and ownership of assessment initiatives at all levels. Ensures an assessment-based planning and budget allocation process.
Deanship's Board of Directors	Lead and oversee assessment efforts within their organizational structure. Primary responsibility for unit compliance with the Institutional Assessment Plan.
Faculty Committee on Planning and Assessment	Serve as a liaison between the Assessment and Institutional Research Office, the Budget Office, and Finance Office for carrying out the planning and budget allocation process by means of assessment results and in light of the institution's fiscal state.
General Education Committee	Periodic review of the mission and goals of the General Education Program. Also, coordinates the assessment plan for General Education.

**Academic Program Lines of Assessment.** The UPR-Cayey offers 27 baccalaureate programs that are organized under eight academic departments and one coordinated program (Natural Sciences). These departments, along with the Natural Sciences Program report to the Dean of Academic Affairs Office. In 2014, it was determined that relying only on specialized accreditation programs limited the key institutional effectiveness indicators needed to assess programs, and as such all programs were required to undergo the Program Review Process established in the Board of Trustees' *Guide for the Assessment of Academic Programs in the UPR* (Certification 43, 2006-2007). To further promote assessment and continuous improvement, those academic programs for which specialized program accreditation agencies existed are also required to undergo the assessment process. As such, there are two primary strategies to assess and validate that all programs are consistent with the institution's mission and are appropriate for higher education standards as is shown in the following figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 Assessment strategies for academic programs alignment



An important endeavor in the UPR-Cayey is to promote a variety of assessment methods. The methods include focus groups, discussion groups and symposiums. These activities have a high number of participants of the UPR-Cayey community including students and faculty members (Appendix 6.2). The advantages of performing these activities include more interaction between faculty and students, rapid data-gathering of student needs, and opportunities of improvement through the discussion process.

**Data Sources.** Figure 6.3 shows the official sources of information and data availability that are used to assess the Institution effectiveness.

Figure 6.3 Sources of Information and Data Availability

Admissions Office	Registrar's Office	AIRO
Information regarding admitted students, first-time degree students, transfer students, and visiting students including: admission GPA, standardized admission test scores, admission index, and incoming student profile.	Information regarding active and non-active students including: enrollment statistics, attrition rates, final grade distributions for each course, course attendance statistics, and graduation rates.	Oversees assessment activities, prepares institutional academic progress reports, administers questionnaires to students and alumni, analyzes questionnaire results, and maintains students' profiles.

The Institution also has a structured process to keep information updated. Institutional and departmental committees, and academic chairs and program coordinators, serve as sources of information that guarantee that institutional and programmatic data required for complying with the departmental and programmatic assessment plans is readily available. Data and assessment resources are also readily available through the AIRO website at <http://cayey.upr.edu/rectoria/oficina-de-planificacion-avaluo-e-investigacion-institucional-opaii/>

**Sharing of Information with the Community.** The UPR-Cayey maintains several communication channels in order to provide accessible information to the academic community (students, staff and faculty) so that decisions can be data driven. A common source is the Institutional Web page, which is located at: <http://cayey.upr.edu>. The UPR-Cayey is also connected to the social networks, such as Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/>.

The UPR-Cayey website has the following purposes:

- To promote an innovative image of UPR-Cayey
- To support management, and to disseminate data related to assessment activities;
- To disseminate information regarding student associations and their activities;
- To cultivate students' ethos;
- To facilitate contact with alumni;
- To support assessment activities;
- To serve as a repository of documents and information; and
- To support academic and administrative management activities.

The approaches used to share information are classified by groups of interest. The following figures 6.3 and 6.4 illustrate this process:

Figure 6.4 Approaches to share information and data with the community

Approach	Purpose
Department Faculty meetings	Discussion of academic and administrative issues for decision-making (policies, bylaws, curriculum, new courses) and others. Sharing of information about learning strategies, evaluation, trends, and others. Select committee representatives and assign responsibilities.
Curriculum Committee meetings	Develop and evaluate new course proposals. Revise curriculum. Approve courses and syllabi revision. Verify that measured student-learning outcomes are included in syllabi.
Faculty Personnel Committee	Evaluate faculty performance to assure that UPR-Cayey is in compliance with learning outcomes.
Electronic page	UPR-Cayey web page <a href="http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/">http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/</a>  UPR-Cayey Facebook page <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/">https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/</a>
Academic Senate	Approve academic certifications used for governance.
Administrative Board	Assure that all administrative processes are in compliance with the UPR and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico bylaws and regulations.

Figure 6.5 Approaches to Share Information and Data with Students and Alumni

Approach	Purpose	
	Active students	Alumni
Electronic page	<p>Share information related to activities, programs of study and news. UPR-Cayey web page <a href="http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/">http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/</a> <a href="http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/">http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/</a></p> <p>UPR-Cayey Facebook page <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/">https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/">https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/</a></p>	<p>Share information related to activities, programs of study and news. UPR-Cayey web page <a href="http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/">http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/</a> <a href="http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/">http://web1.oss.cayey.upr.edu/main/</a></p> <p>UPR-Cayey Facebook page <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/">https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/">https://www.facebook.com/UPRCayey/</a></p>
Meetings	<p>Discuss changes to the academic program. Elicit their opinions regarding innovative ideas, and new procedures</p>	<p>Share innovative ideas and the viability to implement them.</p>
Communication (memorandum, letters)	<p>Disseminate news regarding achievements, faculty decisions, changes in policies, and activities.</p>	<p>Invite alumni to share experiences, submit recommendations, etc.</p>
Internet Radio	<p>Live programming</p>	
Bulletin Boards	<p>To post employment opportunities. Announcement of various activities of the Program, the Faculty, or students' associations. For posting class schedules. For posting professors' office hours. For posting laboratory schedule for additional practice. To promote our mission, vision and values. To promote Business Administration Department activities. To post information about graduate programs.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>

**Assessment data collection strategy.** Assessment data is collected in three areas and then analyzed and interpreted to foster a data-driven decision-making process. These areas are:

- Assessment Area I: Excellence in Undergraduate Programs
- Assessment Area II: Services, Resources, Policies and Structure
- Assessment Area III: Institutional Projection and Prestige

The data collected by the three areas produce a coordinated effort in providing quality education.

## **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

**Assessment strategies.** The UPR-Cayey recognizes the importance of assessing learning outcomes as a measure of excellence in undergraduate education for the success of students. Accordingly, the programs collect and analyze internal and external measures to determine students' performance in demonstrating their proficiency regarding established learning outcomes. The measures used are described in the following paragraphs.

**Assessment Area I: Excellence in Undergraduate Programs.** The Assessment Area I is directed at assessing student learning outcomes with regards to General Education, academic programs, and at the course level. It gathers the necessary documentation to evidence compliance with MSCHE Accreditation Standard 14. This area assesses attainment of all the abilities and contents that UPR-Cayey students should develop as part of their academic formation and complementary co-curricular experiences. Area I is divided into three assessment levels:

Level 1 - Assessment of General Education

Level 2 - Programmatic Assessment

Level 3 – Course-Embedded Student Learning Assessment and Outcomes

**Level 1: Assessment of General Education.** The UPR-Cayey General Education Model (AS Certification 21, 2007-08) is the core component of the institutional assessment plan. The General Education Model provides the opportunity to assess the learning outcomes that are described in the Abilities and Contents of the General Education Model (AS Certification 18, 2001-02) and that are also part of the different curricula at the UPR-Cayey. The uniqueness of the UPR-Cayey plan included 48 credits described as follows:

1. INTD 3027: An Interdisciplinary Seminar for all students (preferably during the first year of study).
2. Forty-five (45) credit hours of General Education core courses.
3. A Capstone course of the discipline of study (three or four credit-hours during the last year of study).

An exit interview is part of the assessment measures of the Interdisciplinary Seminar. Students enrolled in the interdisciplinary course offer their feedback regarding the interdisciplinary seminar's effectiveness through a questionnaire to gather students' input upon entering and upon course completion. The figure 6.6 below shows the results, upon course completion, of the student's ability to describe the General Education Ability and Content as well as the seminar's intended outcome.

Figure 6.6 Results of seminars, abilities, and content expected outcomes

Interdisciplinary Seminar Abilities and Content Expected Outcome	
Abilities	Percentage Average (2009-14)
Effective Oral and Written Communication Skills	78
Critical Thinking	75
Teamwork	70
Information Technology	54
Decision-Making	49
Aesthetic Appreciation	34
Supportive Fellowship	32
Self- Care	24
Mathematical Reasoning	13
Content Knowledge	
Technology	51
Puerto Rico	42
Different Cultures	40
Health	28
The Natural World	22
The Environment and Ecology	21
Interdisciplinary Seminars Expected Outcomes	
Criteria	Average (2009-14)
The course content integrated a perspective of various disciplines	97
Analysis of the content that can be done from several perspectives	97
Information skills integrated into the course	99
Development of the ability to recognize and assess a situation by integrating multiple perspectives	96

Achievement of total interdisciplinary understanding of course concept	93
Interdisciplinary aspect of the course	59

Further analysis and assessment by the Institutional General Education Committee identifies that the difference in the percentage of the abilities and content is due to the effect of the different courses offered as part of the interdisciplinary seminar. Most of the courses offered emphasized the top five abilities and the top three contents. The Dean of Academic Affairs and the Institutional General Education Committee are working on a more balanced course offering. (Appendix 6.3)

To further assess the Abilities and Content component in the UPR-Cayey academic program curriculum, each academic department and the Institutional Curriculum Committees identified a capstone course that each student must be enrolled in during the last academic year. The Abilities and Content component is assessed during the capstone course, as well as the some of the expected outcomes of the academic program (Appendix 6.4)

**General Education Outcomes.** The Academic Senate discussed the General Education report and after a long discussion, the Senate certified the following recommendations:

1. The Interdisciplinary course must be offered to second-year students. Due to academic program requirements, the majority of students opt for registering in the course after the third semester.
2. The Abilities and Content Document needs to be revised. It is a document from the year 2001, and it must be updated to reflect social and economic changes. Therefore, the Institutional General Education Committee will review and submit recommendations to the Academic Senate in 2018.
3. The assessment of the abilities and contents of general education results must be shared with the community in a timely manner and made available to all the academic program curriculum committees.
4. In order to maintain data readily and continually updated, the established assessment cycle is two years.
5. To continue with the Institution support to the General Education model, the Institution will enhance the administrative structure of data collection and analysis.

**Level 2: Programmatic Assessment.** Since 2009, the UPR-Cayey has sustained an assessment culture throughout all its academic programs. All academic programs underwent rigorous assessments by the appropriate Professional Accreditations Agencies and BT Certification 43, 2006-07. To further ensure the rigor of the curriculum and educational excellence, the institution is committed to place emphasis on the recommendations received in order to meet the standards that are promulgated by accreditation agencies.

Figure 6.7 below supports the ongoing assessment carried out by the UPR-Cayey. As of today, no accrediting agency has removed an active accreditation to a program.



Figure 6.7 Assessment criteria used by each of the accreditation agencies are described below:

ACS	1. Goals of Program Approval and Student Certification. 2. Institutional Environment. 3. Faculty and Staff. 4. Infrastructure. 5. Curriculum. 6. Undergraduate Research. 7. Development of Student Skills. 8. Program Self-Evaluation. 9. Certification of Bachelor’s Graduates
NCATE/CAEP	S1-Content and Pedagogical Knowledge. S2-Clinical Partnerships and Practice. S3-Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity. S4- Program Impact. S5- Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement.
ACBSP	1. Leadership. 2. Strategic Planning. 3. Student and Stakeholders 4. Measurement and analysis of Student Learning. 5. Faculty and Staff. 6. Educational and Business Process Management
Library	1. Institutional Effectiveness. 2. Professional Values. 3. Educational Role. 4. Discovery. 5. Collections. 6. Space. 7. Management and Administration. 8. Personnel. 9. External Relations

**Level 3: Course-Embedded Student-Learning Assessment and Outcomes.** The UPR-Cayey recognizes the importance of assessing learning outcomes as a measure of excellence in every course. Multiple course embedded student learning assessment initiatives are integrated across the academic departments. Appendix 6.5 summarizes the initiatives underway, while detailed findings and data-driven decision-making processes are documented through the Student Learning Assessment Inventory Reports (Exhibit 104).

**Assessment Measures used in the UPR-Cayey**

**INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

**Assessment Areas II and III.** Assessment Areas II and III provide results that evidence how well the institution’s resources are collaborating and contributing to the achievement of the UPR-Cayey Mission, Goals, and Objectives, and are thus interrelated. They are highly dependent on the results of Assessment Area I and share assessment strategies, while providing most insight to institutional compliance with MSCHE Accreditation Standard 7.

**Assessment Area II, Services, Resources, Policies, and Structure.** The UPR-Cayey continuously assesses its policies, procedures, and administrative structures in order to provide the best possible services to its students and excellence in all of its endeavors. The following practices highlight best practices where assessment initiatives have led to enhanced student services and institutional process. In depth details for these best practices, as well as other initiatives, are provided in Exhibit 105.

**Assessment Area II Outcomes: Restructured Enrollment Processes.** The UPR-Cayey enrollment process has primarily faced two main challenges: (1) ensuring that students are able to enroll in courses needed for degree completion, (2) relying on an agile system that ensures that students can pay remotely for their courses, with the security that their courses have been reserved for them. This process occurs in four phases:

- Phase I – Course Pre-Selection: students indicate any course that they intend to take during the following semester.
- Phase II – Pre-Enrollment: students select the courses they intend to take, during the scheduling of their preference (course requirements must be met during this phase, and hereon after.

- Phase III – Course confirmation process: students who are satisfied with their courses and do not require any further changes confirm their course load, and may pay electronically without attending the Enrollment Center that is set up each semester as scheduled in the Academic Calendar.
- Phase IV - Enrollment adjustments: students who need additional courses or want to make changes to their selections visit the Enrollment Center, make their selections and then confirm and pay for their courses.

The Chancellor and the Dean of Academic Affairs have prioritized working on achieving a more effective enrollment process at the institution, and several initiatives have stemmed from assessing these processes. In an effort to ensure that students are able to enroll in the courses that correspond to the academic program in which they are enrolled, the Deanship of Academic Affairs has taken the following actions and outcomes.

**Enrollment Processes Actions.** Enrollment turns for phases II and IV, traditionally assigned by academic classification, have been restructured so that students classified as Fourth Year Students, or seniors, are separated in two groups, where students with 100 or more approved credit hours towards degree completion, select their courses before the Fourth Year students with 73 to 99 approved credit hours towards their degree completion. Afterwards, turns are assigned in a descending order from Third Year to First Year students.

Course selection in second year Biology and Chemistry courses have been restricted during Phase II, such that only students formally registered in one of the four Baccalaureate in Science degrees can select these courses.

Data analysis trends demonstrate that second year Biology and students who are not formally registered in a Science Degree, but who intend to reclassify into these programs often take up Chemistry courses. This hinders the course space allocation process, thus limiting spaces available to those students who need these courses to follow through on their academic progress.

Allowing students to freely enroll in those courses that are not formally part of their academic programs, early in the enrollment process, has led to a high volume of students appearing to be enrolled in one program, but seeking to complete a different degree, without reclassifying into the intended the program until they request to be assessed for graduation, which in turn reverts to a hindered academic planning process.

**Enrollment Process Outcomes.** Students are able to enroll in those courses that are needed for them to follow through on their academic roadmap leading to degree completion. Students in the Science programs are finding it easier to enroll in courses that they need within appropriate time scheduling as they have the first choice in selecting Second Year Biology and Chemistry courses. Students have begun to request to reclassify into Science programs at an earlier time, thus making academic planning more efficient.

**Electronic Enrollment Payment Actions and Outcomes.** The UPR-Cayey students have continuously faced difficulties paying electronically for their courses during Phase III of the enrollment process, due to the fact that the Information Systems Office performs many of the processes required for confirmation and payment manually. The following actions and results have occurred:

**Electronic Enrollment Payment Actions.** The Chancellor engaged the help from the UPR Central Administration's Information Systems Office Director to find a solution for the UPR-Cayey enrollment processes from the technological stance. The Central Administration's Information System's Director visited the UPR-Cayey and a Plan was set in place to improve the technological infrastructure for the enrollment process.

**Electronic Enrollment Payment Expected Outcomes.** For the Spring 2016-2017 enrollment process the UPR-Cayey is expected to have transitioned into an infrastructure for enrollment and payment that stems from the UPR-Bayamon's enrollment interphase, which has been demonstrated to be more efficient for these processes than the one currently in place, and with a greater capability to allow the institution to move on to the Systemic Interphase that will be set in place during the following academic years.

The Registrar's Office received orientation, and is currently undergoing training, to more efficiently use the Student Information System, which will allow for setting requirement restrictions for the Enrollment process as early as Phase I, and to more effectively transition into the enrollment interphase that will be used for spring 2016-2017.

**Restructured Course Scheduling Processes Actions and Outcomes.** In spring 2014-2015, the Student Council assessed the course scheduling for that Semester in an effort to contribute to the institution's assessment initiatives, while at the same time striving to foster and improved course scheduling process (Exhibit 106). The following findings and results stemmed from their assessment:

**Course Scheduling Actions.** In an effort to ensure that students are able to enroll in the courses that correspond to the academic program in which they are enrolled, the Dean of Academic Affairs Office has assessed the following:

- There is a tendency towards scheduling courses primarily among three particular periods on Tuesdays and Thursdays: 9:00AM to 10:20AM, 12:30PM to 1:50PM, 2:00PM to 3:30PM.
- In descending order, the days with the most academic activities (lectures, laboratories, and workshops) are: Wednesday, Thursday, Tuesday, Monday, and Friday. Most laboratories are scheduled for Wednesdays.
- Overlapping of courses during these time frames, make it difficult for students to enroll in all the courses they require at any particular semester
- There is a need to distribute class schedules in such a way that General Education Courses and Concentration Courses can be taken throughout the week, without overlapping schedules. Courses should also be scheduled after 3:00PM to increase course availability for students.

**Course Scheduling Outcomes.** During the fall 2015-2016, the number of different courses throughout the week has increased as well as the 3:00PM – 6:20PM course scheduling. (Appendix 6.6)

**Restructured Transfer-in Process Actions and Outcomes.** As of spring 2015-2017, the Deanship of Academic Affairs began to review its transfer-in processes, both through formal articulation with other UPR Units, and the general process whereby students from any program at another unit request to transfer to the UPR-Cayey. It was found that from 2010 to 2015, 590 students were admitted into another Unit under an articulated transfer program with the UPR-Cayey. During that same time frame, the UPR-Cayey accepted 367 students from articulated programs and 313 students by means of general transfers. The fact that nearly equal amounts of students entering by alternate means to the articulated program present a challenge to the institution's academic planning processes, as well as with ensuring that these students have completing requirements at their base institution that are similar in content and rigor to those required at the UPR-Cayey. As such the Institution has taken on the following actions and is expecting the following results:

**Transfer-in Process Actions.** A faculty member has been designated as Transfer Programs Coordinator. The coordinator is currently assessing:

- Amount of articulated transfer-ins enrolled at the UPR-Cayey by cohort.
- Departmental requirements for both articulated transfer programs, as for transfer students in general.
- The transfer-in process so that it may be more efficient in terms of assuring that students meet the necessary requirements, and that there are equal transfer-in admission practices among students arriving through articulated programs, from other UPR units without belonging to articulated programs, and from private institutions.

**Transfer-in Process Outcomes.** It is expected that the coordinator will submit a procedure to standardize admission requirements for all students during the 2016-2017 academic year. Also, the Dean of Academic Affairs has determined that the Department Chairs will evaluate all transfer students. The chairs will evaluate based on student's transcripts to identify courses and requirements in compliance with institutional standards, and will then be passed on to the Registrar's Office, for course validation and notification of admission.

**Restructured of Graduation Processes Actions and Outcomes.** In December 2012, the Academic Senate recommended that the process used to develop the Academic Calendar be revised in such a way that students were to request graduation one year prior to their expected commencement date (AS Certification 17, 2012-2013, Exhibit 107). This in turn implied that the Registrar's Office would have to evaluate all graduate requests before department heads would certify graduation. The following results and actions resulted from this determination:

**Current Graduation Processes.** The Registrar's Office received approximately 720 requests for the academic year in progress (Exhibit 108), with only one person assigned to reviewing each student's academic record. After evaluating the records, the Registrar's Office sent the evaluation to Department Heads, who in turn validate whether the Registrar's evaluation was correct. When discrepancies emerged, a lengthy review process took place with each student's record. Hence, students were not receiving a timely notification of whether they would graduate or if they had any pending requirements.

**Graduation Processes Outcomes.** As of Fall 2016, and as part of a revised student counseling process, Department Heads were given the list of all the students with 120 or more credit hours approved, and for whom an automatic graduation could be assigned (BT Certification 85, 2005-2006, Exhibit 109).

These students were to be contacted and have an appointment scheduled for academic advising and academic record review to determine whether they are graduation candidates for the current academic year. Each student would be evaluated with the Registrar's Office official *Program Evaluation Form*, in order to identify pending requirements, and to define an academic progression plan.

Each evaluation would be submitted to the Registrar's Office, thus reducing the time the administrative office allocates to evaluating student records, and allowing for a timelier notification of graduation requirements. During the Academic 2016-2017 year, the Deanship will present to the Academic Senate its proposal to require that when students request graduation, they must submit evidence of academic counseling and record evaluation by Department Chairs. This in turn will make the graduation notification process, as well as the academic planning process a more efficient one.

**Assessment Area III, Institutional Projection and Prestige.** In other to obtain comparative information and data from within the academic community, selected criteria were benchmarked to information from other campuses within the University of Puerto Rico system as shown in the table below <https://colleges.niche.com>.

Figure 6.6 Comparative Information and Data

Comparative criteria	UPR-Cayey	Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico	Universidad del Turabo	UPR-Humacao
Type	Public	Private	Private	Public
Academics	B+	C-	B-	A-
Diversity	D+	C-	D+	D+
Health & Safety	B+	B	A	A
Transportation	B-	B-	C+	-
Campus Setting	Suburban	Midsized city	Suburban	Suburban
Tuition	\$2,212	\$4,840	\$5,434	\$2,019
Acceptance Rate	83%	65%	46%	45%
SAT Range	949–1239	783–1061	1093–1458	972–1206
Total of Students	3,641	6,171	14,333	3,603
Female Students	2,479	3,621	8,494	2,358
Male Students	1,162	2,550	5,839	1,245
First-time degree Enrollment	879	1,102	2,985	780

The Department of Education of the United States of America has a Scorecard Data Report that compares colleges and universities throughout the nation. These data serve to make a detailed analysis about the competitiveness of UPR-Cayey. The following table presents data of UPR-Cayey when compared to other universities. Refer to Figure 6.7.

Figure 6.7 Comparative Information Data from Department of Education Scorecard

Comparative criteria	UPR-Cayey	Catholic University-Ponce	Universidad del Turabo	UPR-Humacao
Graduation Rate	44%	36%	18%	45%
Retention Rate after their first year	97%	75%	72%	87%
Socio-economic diversity	74% of students have a family income of less than \$40K and receive an income-based federal Pell Grant to help pay for college.	81% of students have a family income of less than \$40K and receive an income-based federal Pell Grant to help pay for college.	87% of students have a family income of less than \$40K and receive an income-based federal Pell Grant to help pay for college.	75% of students have a family income of less than \$40K and receive an income-based federal Pell Grant to help pay for college.
Most Popular Programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services (25%)</li> <li>2. Education (20%)</li> <li>3. Psychology (18%)</li> <li>4. Multi / Interdisciplinary Studies (14%)</li> <li>5. Biological and Biomedical Sciences (9%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health Professions and Related Programs (24%)</li> <li>2. Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services (18%)</li> <li>3. Public Administration and Social Service Professions (9%)</li> <li>4. Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities (8%)</li> <li>5. Psychology (7%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services (32%)</li> <li>2. Education (15%)</li> <li>3. Health Professions and Related Programs (13%)</li> <li>4. Social Sciences (9%)</li> <li>5. Engineering Technologies and Engineering - Related Fields (6%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services (35%)</li> <li>2. Health Professions and Related Programs (17%)</li> <li>3. Biological and Biomedical Sciences (15%)</li> <li>4. Education (9%)</li> <li>5. Public Administration and Social Service Professions (9%)</li> </ol>

**Findings**

UPR-Cayey has improved its decision-making process based on assessment. The following are examples of the process:

1. Program Moratoria

Assessment of enrollment and graduation rates concluded no need for certain programs (See Exhibit 110). All courses were offered and a follow up of the students was carried out.

2. Change in program name

Assessment of the role and expectations of the students and external stakeholders led to the department of Business Administration to change the name of its Secretarial Studies program to Office Administration.

3. Curriculum changes due to external accreditation

GB Certification 80, Exhibit 111) provides the tools for a timely change of curriculum based on accreditation or changes to laws by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

4. Review and changes in the UPR-Cayey organizational chart

The 2016 Self-Study provided the opportunity to review and change the role and location of the AIRO Office. A proposal to move the Assessment Area I component of the AIRO Office to the Dean of Academic Affairs is under review by the Institution.

5. Faculty and staff tenure and non-tenure track recruitment policies

The 2016 Self-Study realization of a greater role of the non-tenured faculty provided the opportunity to review faculty recruitment, evaluation policies, and procedures. The UPR-Cayey Academic Senate and Administrative Board reviews are underway.

6. Research as a cornerstone of the institution

The Academic Senate and Administrative Boards established policies and procedures that reflect the importance of research not only as an academic tool, but as a potential for external funding.

7. Graduation requirements: Research, Community Service and Artistic Creation

The UPR-Cayey effectively demonstrates its commitment to an undergraduate education of excellence by providing the students with the tools needed to fulfill the expectation of graduate schools, the external stakeholders and the students.

8. Review of Mission and Goals, Strategic Plan, Alumni studies, etc.

The UPR-Cayey is currently discussing its mission in order to clarify terms and expectations within the community. The Mission review will lead to revision of the strategic plan and Institution Alumni expected outcomes. (See Chapter 1: Mission and Goals).

9. Budget allocation

The UPR-Cayey prides itself on the assessment procedure that has produced a balanced budget and that has provided the effective use of the resources to accomplish its mission. The UPR-Cayey will continue with this practice (see Chapter 3).

10. General Education Assessment outcomes

An effective assessment of the General Education Component will lead the Institution to increase its awareness in an interdisciplinary education throughout UPR-Cayey academic curricula.

11. UPR-Cayey admission procedures: IMI and Cupos (Space in class)

The UPR-Cayey is the leading institution within the UPR regarding the percentage of student applicants and student admission. The Academic Senate and the Administrative Boards have established a highly assessed procedure recognized as a model for other units of the UPR.

12. Major and non-major Organic Chemistry

The Department of Chemistry's goal to be recognized by the American Chemical Society (ACS) led to changes in the content of some courses of its curriculum. The expected outcome is an increase in the number of students that pass the State Board Test, as well as to increase its chances of ACS recognition.

## NEXT STEPS

In order to strengthen the initiatives to gather course-embedded student learning assessment initiatives, the administration is currently assessing restructuring the Assessment and Institutional Research Officer (AIRO). The key indicators pointing at the need for this restructuring include: diminished response rate among faculty providing input through the Student Learning Assessment Inventory (Appendix 6.7), lack of consistency among the data gathered by the AIRO and those used by the Dean of Academic Affairs Office, mainly due to the fact that there are different cut-off dates, data gathering sources, and interpretations; lack of connection between the AIRO and the academic constituents of the Institution. As such, the administration is considering:

- Designating a Faculty member as Assessment Coordinator and transfer the administrative Research Associate position to the Deans of Academic Affairs Office to collaborate and enhance data gathering regarding programmatic, student learning, and academic initiatives in a timely manner, consistent with the processes that fall under the purview of the Dean of Academic Affairs Office.
- Transferring each of the Faculty Research positions that currently respond to the AIRO, to the deanships of Student and Administrative Affairs to foster the development of institutional research themes that address the needs and services of both structures, while at the same time developing and implementing coherent and continuous assessment initiatives.

Maintain the number of programs undergoing accreditation processes by Professional Accreditation Agencies.

Provide a stable communication system that allows faculty, administrators and staff to conduct real-time assessment. Thus, the Institution must evaluate the expansion and efficiency of its technology infrastructure.

Coordinate an assessment-training plan for all faculty and community members responsible for the Institution's assessment plan. The goal is to provide the skills and knowledge for gathering data and analysis in accordance with the Institution's expected outcomes.

Assess the current student profile to ensure that the institutional expected outcome meets the student-learning expected outcomes. There is a need of a structure procedure of annual data-gathering and analysis related to the student profile.

Evaluate the total credits of each program, standardizing the total of credits including reduction. The evaluation will consider the credits by college majors to assure compliance with learning outcomes in accordance with the institution budget.