Certification Statement:
Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and Federal Title IV Requirements
(Effective October 1, 2009)

An institution seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must affirm by completing this certification statement that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE requirements of affiliation and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 such as those on distance education and transfer of credit.

The signed statement must be attached to the executive summary of the institution’s self-study report.

If it is not possible to certify compliance with all such requirements, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AT AGUADILLA
(Name of Institution)

is seeking (Check one):    ___ Initial Accreditation    ✓ Reaffirmation of Accreditation

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established requirements of affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 such as those on distance education and transfer of credit, and that it has complied with the MSCHE policy, “Related Entities.”

___ Exceptions are noted in the attached memorandum (Check if applicable)

[Signature]
Chief Executive Officer
Ivelice Cerdona-Narváez

January 19, 2011
(Date)

[Signature]
Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors

January 20, 2011
(Date)
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Executive Summary

The vision and mission of the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UdPRAg) are to be found within the general philosophical framework that underlies the ideal of a university as envisioned by the University of Puerto Rico System. This model is based on the values and principles that endorse academic and professional excellence based on knowledge, dedication, competency, integrity and merit. Within this context, the main objective of the University is to develop human beings that hold the highest criteria of academic excellence, intellectual work, and commitment to quality education that responds effectively to social needs. It aims to encourage social change through democratic participation and respect for human rights.

To achieve the goals and objectives, set at the UPRAg, resources are carefully allocated so that they are aligned with the Strategic Plan. The resources available in the UPR at Aguadilla are rather limited so this process is subject to an exhaustive analysis. As a result of the global and local recession the government appropriations have steadily declined which aggravates central government’s deficit and consequently, the UPR budget confronts a proportional decline for the current and upcoming fiscal years. The Board of Trustees took the required and corrected decisions that allow the System to adjust to the funds available to the University. As a result, to deal with the crisis, a series of certifications were emitted by the Board of Trustees to achieve substantial cost reduction. The UPR at Aguadilla Strategic Plan and the Systemic “Ten for the Decade” Planning Agenda guide the effective use of Institutional Resources in the context of the UPRAg Mission and Goals.

During the past five academic years (2005-2010), the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UdPRAg) has effectively accomplished many important objectives on its way to achieving the emblematic goals that were set in its Strategic Plan 2006-2011. This institution has singled out information technology and the achievement of programmatic accreditation as the focus areas for institutional improvement; consequently, these areas are the implicit and explicit priorities for this report. Thus, the institutional steering committee has provided an
objective and unbiased account of the areas mentioned, as the data and information provided in this report demonstrate.

It is important to note that UPRAg has invested substantial assets to develop an infrastructure of material and human resources in order to provide access and use of the Information Technology (IT). Over the past eight years, the institution has been literally immersed in a concerted effort of designing, managing, and administrating this IT infrastructure. In this pursuit, UPRAg has demonstrated the ability to apply technology systems to support and facilitate the administration of its academic programs and has effectively established standards and procedures. The institution has also made great strides in using and integrating these technological resources to enrich and improve the teaching and learning process. The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla continue to invest in IT in order to improve upon the excellent foundation that has been provided, despite the difficult economic times.

The Center for Educational Technologies in Multimedia (CETEM) continues advancing the emblematic goal to incorporate multimedia technology to all facets of the teaching and learning process. In 2001 UPRAg received a grant over $2 million, under the Federal Title V Program, to create a Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM). CETEM is now an integral part of the resources at UPRAg. One of its main objectives is to teach the faculty and students basic computer and multimedia technological skills. A major part of CETEM’s effort has been devoted to developing the technical and pedagogical support infrastructure to facilitate the integration of educational strategies and techniques aimed at improving the overall teaching and learning process. More specifically, CETEM has had a tremendous impact on the effort to develop the institutional capacity to integrated online resources. It is important to highlight that this effort permits the offering of several online courses in every academic department.

Several institutional instruments reflected assessment of student satisfaction with the integration of technology related skills. The Graduates’ Profile of 2007, 2008 and 2009 study’s purpose was to conduct an assessment of the satisfaction of UPRAg graduates with the institutions programs, services and resources.
These study revealed that:

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<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stated that the institution was instrumental in developing the workplace computer related skills.</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported that UPRAg had an enormous influence on their discipline</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>97%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Label the quality of the general curriculum course as either excellent or good</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label the quality of specialty courses as either excellent or good</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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For the professional accreditation, the other area of emphasis, great effort was made to obtain recognition and professional accreditation of several degree programs which had involved different institutional components in a monumental assessment effort and much has been achieved. The accreditation process has yielded very positive results for our academic programs. It is important to distinguish the professional recognition of the:

- BBA Program, which has been accredited in 2009 by the Association of Collegiate Business School Programs (ACBSP).
- Teacher Preparation Program has been accredited in 2010 by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
- The Library has been in compliance since 2007 with the standards of the Association of Colleges and Research Libraries (ACRL)

In the process of professional accreditation are:

- Department of Orientation and Guidance; professional program accreditation by the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS)
- Bachelor Electronic degree program goals and curriculum objectives are being revised in order to comply with Technology Accreditation Commission Accreditation Board for Engineering & Technology (TAC-ABET) accreditation standards.
- BBA concentration in Information Systems is in the process of complying with the accreditation of ABET.
Office Systems Department is immersed in the process of complying with the accreditation criteria established by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools Programs (ACBSP) for its bachelor’s degree program in office systems.

Most of the educational-related activities carried out on the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UPRAg) have a content, focus, location, mode of teaching, and/or sponsorship different from the regular degree-granting academic programs. These education-related activities make possible a lifetime, ongoing learning and meet the particular needs of non-traditional students. The University endeavors to respond appropriately to changing educational regional needs by offering innovative programs and courses that are developed, monitored, and improved via quality-focused policies and procedures. They also satisfy the off-Campus community need for personal, professional, and cultural enrichment, also express in voluntary participation in different activities for the benefit of the external community.
Self-Study Steering Committee

Executive Committee

Prof. Miguel A. González, Chair of the Executive and Steering Committee
Aux. Dean of Academic Affairs
Dr. Ana Cuebas, Co-chair of the Steering Committee
Prof. Edwin Ríos, Co-chair of the Steering Committee

Task Groups

Mission, Goals and Integrity
Prof. Leonardo López
Prof. Gladys Cruz
Mr. Carlos A. Jiménez
Mr. John A. González, student body representative

Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal
Mr. Gerardo Javariz, Dir. of the Institutional Research and Planning Office
Mrs. Eileen Vega, Director of Budget Office
Mr. Luis Rivera, former Director of Finance Office

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Prof. Edwin Ríos
Dr. Julio V. Montalvo
Sr. David Y. Román, student body representative

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Prof. Elba I. Roman, Director of Counseling and Guidance Department
Prof. Pablo A. Ramirez, Dean of Student Affairs
Prof. Daisy Perez
Mrs. Veronica Lopez, Assistant to the Chancellor
Mrs. Melba Serrano, Director of Admissions Office
Mrs. Zaida Serrano, Director of Register Office
Miss Milagros J. Ruiz, student body representative

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Dr. Francisco Valentín
Prof. Wanda Crespo
Dr. Judith Diez
Prof. Diana Ruiz, retired and former Dean of Academic Affairs
Prof. Miguel A. Gonzalez
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   Prof. Sara Paredes
   Prof. María de los A. Ortiz, Director Office System Department
   Miss Yaitza Méndez, student body representative

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   Prof. Anibal Rowney

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   Dr. Robert J.W. Mayer
   Prof. William Muñiz
   Delfín Cardona, student body representative

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   Prof. Sylvia Castillo, Dir. Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia
   Prof. Aida Mendez
   Prof. Benjamin Rivera
   Prof. Mary Moore
   Mrs. Ada Esteves

Final Editing
   Mrs. Olga I. Natal
   Mrs. Marisol Salas
   Mrs. Celines Figueroa
   Mrs. Nancy Nieves
   Mrs. Zaida Serrano
   Mrs. Candelaria Gomez
   Dr. Ana Cuebas
   Prof. Edwin Rios
   Dr. Carlos Ivan Hernandez
   Dr. Myrna Rosa
   Dr. Robert J.W. Mayer
   Mrs. Maria Mantilla
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THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO SYSTEM

The University of Puerto Rico (UPR), founded in 1903, is a state-supported university system established by Law No. 1 of January 20, 1966 (1.1), as amended. The UPR System is governed by a Board of Trustees and a President who, as executive officer, presides over the University Board, and is assisted by vice presidents of academic affairs, research, financial and budget directors. Its main mission is to serve the people of Puerto Rico and contribute to the development and enjoyment of the fundamental, ethical and aesthetic values of Puerto Rican culture, and committed to the ideals of a democratic society. To advance its mission, the University strives to provide high quality education and to create, complement and transform the knowledge in the Technology, the Sciences and the Arts.

The University of Puerto Rico System is the oldest and largest university system in Puerto Rico. On January 20, 1966 a new law reorganized the University of Puerto Rico granting complete autonomy to the Mayagüez, Río Piedras and the Medical Science campuses. During the period of 1966 to 1978 eight new campuses were established with regional impacts in Aguadilla, Arecibo, Carolina, Cayey, Bayamon, Humacao, Ponce and Utuado. In 1993, legislation was approved to grant the Board of Trustees the duties previously performed by the Council on Higher Education. Since 1993 the Council on Higher Education remains as the regulatory body that license the operation of the public and private universities in Puerto Rico.

Figure 1  Map of Puerto Rico with the UPR Campus location
On November 6, 1997 the Board, by means of Certification number 055-1997-98 (1.2), approved the Plan to convert the colleges under the Central Administration of Regional Colleges in autonomous educational units. As the end result of this process, the Board of Trustees also extended autonomy to the regional colleges, which transferred decision making processes and diverse functions to each unit. Certification 055 established the legal mission of the newly autonomous units. The mission was expressed as follows:

"It will offer college level programs intended for transfers to other institutional units, as well as associate and baccalaureate degrees. The programs will give priority to careers and professions of a technological nature, designed to meet the demand for human resources in diverse socio-economic sectors, regions and communities served by these units, and to Puerto Rico in general."

At present, the UPR System offers a total of 463 different academic degrees in Arts, Sciences, Business, Engineering and Technology, including 35 philosophy and professional doctorates, 128 masters, 16 graduate certificates, 245 baccalaureate and 39 associate degrees, many of which are unique to the Island, plus 42 medicine and dental medicine residency programs and 192 transfer programs between units leading to baccalaureate degrees.

Tuition is among the lowest in the nation, accounting for less than 10% of UPR revenues. In accordance with a 4% annual increase per incoming class established in Certification No. 60 (2006-2007) (1.3) of the Board of Trustees, tuition has increased from $45 per undergraduate credit hour in 2007 to $51 in 2010 and from $113 per graduate credit hour in 2007 to $127 in 2010.

Each cohort is guaranteed the same tuition rate for a period of 150% the time required for degree completion. Since its inception, the UPR has educated the majority of the top leadership of Puerto Rico’s academic, business, and government sectors and confers degrees at the rate of 9,000 per year. Of the over 30,000 high school students that take the College Board in Puerto Rico, 65% apply for admission to the UPR; one out of each three university students in the Island pursues studies in UPR; and one of every two university degrees are conferred by the UPR. Over 90% of the UPR student body is of Hispanic origin, with close to 70% of undergraduates...
receiving the PELL Grant. With a faculty and non-teaching personnel of close to 5,000 and 9,000 respectively, and a total enrollment of over 65,000 in 2009-2010, UPR is the premier Hispanic serving institution in the United States and the baccalaureate origin institution of 17% of all Hispanics that have obtained a Ph.D. in Science and Engineering nationwide. In Chapter 4 of this Self Study more details will be covered about the organizational structure of the UPR System.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AT AGUADILLA

The UP RaG is a public, coeducational institution, one of the eleven autonomous campuses comprising the University of Puerto Rico System. It is located on a former Air Force Base on the northwestern region of the island. It serves a population largely drawn from the surrounding municipalities.

- The former name of UP RaG was Aguadilla Regional College (known as CORA, Spanish acronym for Colegio Regional de Aguadilla)
- Established by means of Certification number 63-1971-72 of the Council of Higher Education of Puerto Rico on April 7, 1972. Since then, CORA was incorporated to the Central Administration of Regional Colleges and given tasks analogous to other regional higher education colleges, which were to “offer preparatory programs for transfer to higher education and training programs in professional careers and associate degrees”.
- In the past three to four decades, the former regional colleges, including CORA, have evolved from offering a variety of two year programs in the field of technology and baccalaureate programs in several fields of knowledge.

In 1999, the Board of Trustees granted the institution its autonomy (Certification No. 77, 1998-1999) (1.4) from the Regional Colleges Administration. In April 2000, the Board’s Certification No.103, 1999-2000 (1.5) dictated that the College will be known as the UP RaG. In Chapter 4 of this Self Study more details will be covered about the organizational structure of our Institution.

At present 2,623 students are served by 179 faculty members and 194 non-faculty personnel. Eighty two percent of the faculty members are full-time employees of the institution, 64% of whom are tenured. Full-time faculty distribution by rank is as follows: 26% are Full Professors,
24% Associate Professors, 35% Assistant Professors, and 15% Instructors. Twenty three percent (23%) of the full-time faculty members has a doctoral degree.

**NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE SELF-STUDY**

A close scrutiny of the Strategic Plans 2000-2005 and 2006-2011 of the UPRAg centered on teaching and learning. It emphasizes in academic program development in connection with the needs and demands of the contemporary society and assures that all programs and academic initiatives are actually promoting learning and are align with quality standards as set forth by external accrediting bodies.

Accordingly, at present the Instructional Technology (IT) Initiative and the Accreditation Initiative are two *emblematic projects* (1.6) that are having the most significant impact on the institution. To sustain the IT Initiative, the institution has improved its network infrastructure and computing capabilities (See chapter 7, pages 147 to 158). Moreover, it has made significant strides towards developing effective faculty and students IT skills. The Accreditation Initiative emphasized the assessment and revision of programs. The goal is to obtain external professional accreditation or validation of programs and services. The following programs attained accreditations:

- **Baccalaureate in Business Administration** (2009) from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).
- **Baccalaureate in English (Multimedia Technology Program) and Education (Art Program in Elementary Education)** (2010) from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Other academic programs are in the process of accreditation. The Professional Counseling Services are also moving toward their professional accreditation. The Campus Library was assessed and received positive recognition by the *Association of College and Research Libraries* (ACRL) in June 2007.
GOALS OF THE SELF-STUDY

The goal of the Self-Study process was to evaluate the current curricular, co-curricular, institutional academic programs and practices in the context of our stated mission, goals and objectives. During the process we examined that the UPRAg engaged the areas of instructional technology and program accreditation, and accomplished to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) accreditation standards. In order to achieve these purposes, the following objectives have been established:

- To make all members of UPRAg more knowledgeable about the institution in order to nourish their continuing commitment to its mission and goals.
- To ascertain the impact of both the IT (Instructional Technology) and the Professional Accreditation initiatives and further their advancement.
- To use findings to engage in a proactive strategic planning process that will set the agenda for institutional improvement.
- To strengthen the scope and effectiveness of the assessment processes to support the analysis of institutional and educational effectiveness.

THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

In December 2008, the Self-Study Steering Committee was appointed by the Chancellor. In selecting the members the Chancellor used the following criteria:

- Organizational, communication, and leadership skills;
- Expertise in academic and administrative areas;
- The ability to reach conclusions based on objective data;
- An opportunity to develop accreditation expertise in individuals new to the process.

The Self-Study Steering Committee includes faculty, administrators, and students. All academic and major administrative divisions of the UPRAg are represented. Experience is balanced; it includes both seasoned members of the academic community and some relatively new members. The Committee is responsible for coordinating all phases of the self-study process and providing the necessary leadership on campus. It has developed the Self-Study Design and prepared charges for the sub-committees. It will adhere to the timetable as closely as possible,
ensure public dissemination and discussion on the drafts of the Self-Study report and coordinate efforts to produce the final version.

The major contents of this self-study report were produced by a broadly-based self-study committee over a period of twelve months, from October 2009 through September 2010. Nine subcommittees have been organized based on the fourteen standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In several cases, related standards were grouped under one subcommittee. Each subcommittee will be coordinated by a member of the Steering Committee, chosen for his or her proven expertise or interest. This arrangement provided direct communication between the Steering Committee and the subcommittees. The subcommittees included faculty, students, and administrative staff, as appropriate.

The Chair of the Steering Committee met with subcommittees at the start of their work. Subcommittees worked accordingly to their own meeting schedules. All subcommittees have access to relevant printed documents and electronic inventory of support documents. During the Middle States process, the Steering Committee periodically requested drafts and provide feedback on all team work group reports. The report was reviewed and updated by the various constituencies of the UPRAg, edited by members of the Steering Committee, and then reviewed once again by the self-study working group chairs prior to a final editing. In order to maintain the integrity of the self-study committee’s work we have let the recommendations stand as approved by the working groups, adding updates to each section as needed to bring the report up to date as of December 2010. The Steering Committee then developed this comprehensive report discussed among the UPRAg constituencies.
CHAPTER 2  Mission and Goals (Standard 1) / Integrity (Standard 6)

STANDARD 1: MISSION GOALS The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who 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 used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Introduction

The current Mission, Goals, Objectives and the Statement of Purpose and Values of the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UPRAg) resulted from an exhaustive process coordinated by a Steering Committee representative of all campus constituents. The statement was elaborated through ample and serious discussion, with full participation of students, faculty and non-faculty personnel, and the external community. The statement was subsequently revised and ratified by the third Strategic Planning Cycle, that produced the Strategic Plan 2006-2011.

Copies of the mission statement are place in all academic buildings, deanship, and the library, as well on the UPRAg official website. Most significantly, the mission statement is the point of reference for articulating both the daily activities of the institution and its emblematic projects. Since it is fundamental to all decisions regarding teaching, research, and the services offered to support student learning, all campus constituents are required to refer to the statement in all important deliberations.

The vision and mission of the UPRAg are to be found within the general philosophical framework that underlies the ideal of a university as envisioned by the University system of Puerto Rico. This model is based on the values and principles that endorse professional excellence based on knowledge, dedication, competency, integrity and merit. Within this context, the main objective of the University is to develop human beings that hold the highest criteria of academic excellence, intellectual work, and commitment to quality education that responds effectively to social needs. It aims to encourage social change through democratic participation and respect for human rights. Establish the role of humanistic and socio-historical academy,
framed in aesthetic and ethical values as well as emphasis on the responsibility of the university to create, complement and transform knowledge in Technology, Sciences and Arts.

Vision

The vision of the UPRAg is clear and consonant with the concept of a university as outlined in the previous section:

The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla will be a model of excellence for similar institutions, both within and outside of Puerto Rico. The institution aims to be at the vanguard of academic activities, offering innovative programs centered in the needs and interests of the students and relevant to the economic, social, and cultural needs of Puerto Rico, particularly those of the northwestern region.

In this statement, the UPRAg also provides its own notion of what should be the ideal university. The university is conceived as innovative, progressive and keeps up with the current educational and technological advancements. Its addresses the particular needs and characteristics of students of the northwestern region of Puerto Rico.

Mission and goals

The mission and main purposes of UPRAg are:

Mission

The mission of the UPRAg is to provide educational alternatives, within the arts, sciences and technologies that respond to the economic, social, and cultural needs of Puerto Rico, particularly those of the northwestern part of the Island. Academic options include programs at the baccalaureate and associate degree levels, professional certificates, and credit and non-credit courses for professional and technical development or personal growth.

Statement of purpose and values

We are committed to the offering of academic programs that meet stringent criteria of academic excellence. They are geared towards meeting the needs of our principal beneficiaries which are the students and their families, their present or potential employers, and our corporate clients. The activity of the institution occurs within the dynamics of the new technological global society and the particular characteristics of Puerto Rico. In this context, the educational process is visualized as a human experience that not only provides students with adequate preparation for work, but also with a socio-humanistic background to help them integrate and
participate constructively in their communities. The awareness and practice of learning as a life-long experience is also cultivated.

Institutional understanding of the educational mission, research and services of our Campus comes from a long historical process/progression, as explained in Chapter 1. This process, as outlined in the Plan to convert the regional colleges into autonomous institutional units (2.1) and the Certification 55 (1997-98) Board of Trustees (1.2), arise from changes in Puerto Rico historical conditions and the diverse needs of the region that they served. The Plan indicates the reasons for amending the mission of the regional colleges:

"In the interest of meeting the objective of decentralizing the functions of the Administration of Regional Colleges, and addressing the demands of the academic communities, the Board of Trustees adopted the autonomy Plan for colleges under the Administration of Regional Colleges."

During the mid-1990s the constituents of the UPRAg began the revision of both the original and legal missions, and goals transferred to the unit through the autonomy process. This joint review led to the establishment of the mission and goals that currently guide the planning, resource management and academic activity of our Campus. The revised mission and goals were presented and approved by the Academic Senate, the Administrative Board and Chancellor. Once they were approved, the university community was informed and finally they were incorporated in the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 (2.2) and a Plan for the Assessment of Academic, Student and Administrative Affairs.

Since 2005, the mission and goals of the UPRAg were influenced by an Institutional (Systemic) plan developed by the Central Administration of the UPR System. This Systemic Plan is known as Ten for the Decade (Diez para la Década) (2.3) This document presents new concepts to conceptualize a more tempered University to modern times. This document

1 Section 11 of the 1998 Act No. 186 of the Legislature of Puerto Rico required to the University of Puerto Rico Board of Trustees to prepare a plan of action to gradually convert the existing Regional Colleges into autonomous institutional units. The implementation of this plan shall conclude no later than July 1, 2002. As part of the development of this plan, the Board of Trustees shall adopt the pertinent determinations regarding the dissolution of the Administration of Regional Colleges and the rights of its officials and employees.
prompted the alignment of the mission and goals of the UPR to the strategic plans and available budget. There are several PowerPoint presentations to the Academic Senate that shows the efforts towards achieving a systemic integration of the mission and goals:

- **Alignment of Ten for the Decade and Strategic Plan** 2006-2011 with Emblematic Projects (2.4)
- **Operationalizing Ten for the Decade** (September 2008) (2.5)

The review process, described above, made possible the systematic articulation of the mission, goals and objectives among all components of the institution. This process provides a broad context within which to frame the goals and objectives of the academic departments, service offices and other institutional offices.

**Alignment of mission and plans with curricular and co-curricular initiatives:**

Our academic programs goals, learning objectives and others initiatives are align with the mission statement and strategic plan. This section summarizes the consistency of the mission statement and the strategic plan in promoting student learning, academic support activities, assessment, planning and decisions on resource allocation. The [Action Plans (2004-2010)](2.6) present evidence of the degree of alignment and integration of the Instructional Technology Initiative and the Accreditation Initiative with the mission statement and goals of the institution.

**Goal 1:** Respond to the social, cultural, and economic needs of Puerto Rico, particularly the northwestern region, through innovative, and relevant educational programs, considering both degree-granting and non-degree-granting alternatives.

This goal can be directly associated with the UPRAg Mission Statement, that stated *provide educational alternatives, within the arts, sciences and technologies that respond to the economic, social, and cultural needs of Puerto Rico, particularly those of the northwestern part of the Island.*

**Objectives, activities and achievements related to Goal 1:**

- Continuous improvement of programs will be assured through systematic assessment, so that:
o All academic programs will be submitted to formative assessment activities each year, placing emphasis on student learning outcomes.

o A five-year formal comprehensive assessment/revision schedule will continue to be enforced.

o General Education will be appropriately integrated

For the 2008-2009 *Institutional Annual Report*:

o The comprehensive assessment of the Education in English with Multimedia Technology Program was 50% completed.

o 9 of the 10 academic departments emphasize their assessment activities on the critical thinking component.

o The Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory was administered to 460 students.

❖ Obtain external professional accreditation for the bachelor’s degree programs:

 o Since April 2009, the Business Administration Program and four of its areas of concentration (Accounting, Finance, Marketing and Human Resources) received the internationally accreditation from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)

 o In November 2010 the UPRAg received the accreditation of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (NCATE) for the English with Multimedia Technology Program and the Arts Program in Elementary Education.

**Goal 3:** Improve general learning outcomes, keeping student integral development at the center of institutional priorities.

This goal can be directly associated with the UPRAg Statement of Purpose and Values, which stated: *We are committed to the offering of academic programs that meet stringent criteria of academic excellence. They are geared towards meeting the needs of our principal beneficiaries which are the students.*
Objectives, activities and achievements related to Goal 3:

- Increase students’ academic performance and satisfaction with their programs to the level where retention rates rise:
  - To at least 87% - after first year retention
  - To at least 70% - after second year retention

For the 2008-2009 Institutional Annual Report:

- The Campus Life Adjustment Course (INTD 3019) was introduced to the UPRAg students.
- The UPRAg Student Retention Committee recommended activities such as Occupational Interest Test and Walking Counseling Sessions, that were already included in the draft of the Student Retention Plan
- Since 2006 The Department of Counseling and Guidance designed activities to better serve high risk students.

- Improve student basic skills in Spanish, English, and Mathematics as measured by
  - Improved performance in achievement tests
  - Better grades in basic courses
  - Better grades in other courses dependent on basic skills

Since 2006 the Office of Planning and Institutional Research presents reports to the Academic Senate, which includes statistics of the basic skills courses, giving special emphasis to the courses that have a 50% or less pass rate, also call “critical courses”. The Dean of Academic Affairs implemented, since 2008, a pre-test and post-test assessment activity, to first year students and then a follow-up test on the third year. This test focused on the basic skills already mentioned and compare the pre- and post-test results.

**Goal 4**: Continue to effectively integrate the new Information Technologies (IT) into the teaching-learning process.

This goal is represented in the UPRAg Vision “The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla will be a model of excellence for similar institutions both within and outside of Puerto Rico. The institution aspires to be at the vanguard of academic activities”
Objectives, activities and achievements related to Goal 4:

- Institutionalize the Multimedia Educational Technology Center (CETEM, Spanish Acronym for Centro de Tecnología Educativa en Multimedios) (2.12) to provide a permanent and effective support structure for faculty instructional development, student basic IT training, and basic academic computing services.
  - From 2001 to 2005 the CETEM was funded by a Title V Grant from the US Department of Education, in 2006 the UPRAg identified funds that assure the continuation of the Center and its activities, and now is an essential component of UPRAg.

- Develop a comprehensive five-year IT Academic Plan to continue with the successful initiatives already in progress to infuse IT into the educational process.

Integration of the technology in the teaching-learning process:

The mission demonstrates the principle of excellence and quality of the teaching-learning process. In order to improve the student’s experience, several strategies have been developed to promote their overall development and their satisfaction within the learning process. As a priority, the UPRAg has instituted a plan for continuing professional development of the faculty members. This plan uses workshops and other instructional modalities to satisfy the needs of the faculty regarding the use of educational technology.

The ultimate goal is that the faculty integrates the use of educational technology in the teaching-learning process and that these resources will stimulate change, motivate and impact the experience of students in the classroom. The activities of this project are officially coordinated by Educational Technology Center in Multimedia (CETEM). The results are discussed in more detail in Chapter IX of this Self-study.

Other indicators that denote the alignment of the mission and goals to the criterion of academic excellence are:

- The Institutional support for activities that encourages and promotes student’s creative and formative processes.
The development of academic activities by academic departments and the Students Deanship to involve students and the overall community participation. During the academic year, 70 percent of the academic departments held weekly activities devoted to the dissemination, analysis and discussion of key themes and issues specific to the various academic disciplines. Students participate actively in the programming of those activities. Participation is shown through their attendance and involvement as presenters of research and creative works of their own authorship. Examples of the student contribution are recorded in annual reports rendered by the departments of Spanish, Education, Business Administration, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Academic and Student Deanships promote other activities to serve the interests and educational preferences of students according to their academic programs.

- CETEM offers workshops aimed at increasing skills in the use of educational technology.
- The English and Mathematics Departments have instituted a tutoring program to improve basic skills of students in their respective areas.
- The Departments of Natural Sciences, Education, Business Administration and Electronics have established internships and on the job training courses as part of their curricula.
- The Departments of Humanities and Social Sciences involve students in community and environmental projects. The Humanities Department offers students a range of artistic experiences and encourages the development of the fine arts through a chorus, band, theater groups and an elective course in painting. All these activities and achievements are contained in the annual reports prepared by the departments.

The mission and goals have been developed through the collaborative participation of the entire university community committed to the advancement and growth of the institution. Each year specific areas are emphasized, developed and aligned with the goals and the budget of the institution.
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.

According to The Characteristics of Excellence (2.7), an educational institution that seeks to provide the most conducive environment to achieve its mission and goals for the pursuit of learning:

- Must provide an environment that rests on the attribute of integrity. In the search for truth a university will not be faithful to its mission if once it finds the truth; the institution does not abide by it. Thus, integrity is essential.
- All the university activities must have constituents that abide and give testimony to the truth wherever it is found.
- This integrity must permeate the way the institution specifies its goals and promotes academic freedom as the center of all its activities, as well as in the excellence and appropriateness that is instilled in the institution’s management; the curricula; and faculty, student and community services in addition to the effective communication that must exist between these components.

The strategic planning of the university fosters a constant evaluation, assessment, and revision of the relationship between the mission, the quality of the services performed by the university, and the internal and external perception of how responsible and faithful the university is in dealing with its constituencies and the public in its compliance with the mission, thus establishing the basis for institutional integrity.

In the conduct of its programs and activities and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom. The UPRAg possesses fair and impartial processes and promotes thorough ethical practices and respect for faculty, non-faculty staff, and students through its teaching, services, administrative practices, use of technology, labor relations, and research.

The Law No. 1 of January 20, 1966 (1.1), amended as UPR General By-Laws, certifications of the Council on Higher Education, the Board of Trustees, and the University Board provide policies and regulations based on ethical practices.
Puerto Rico Commonwealth’s Law of Government Ethics was established to preserve the integrity of the public personnel and institutions of the Government of Puerto Rico. The UPR is a public corporation that conforms to the same law. According to the Office of Government Ethics (2.8), the UPR System and all public employees must complete a minimum of ten hours of continuing education on ethics topics every two years.

The Institutional Ethics Committee was created under the Law Number 12, July 12, 1985 (2.9). This committee is in charge of providing various activities and workshops yearly to promote ethical practices. Some of the activities carried out are:

- Distribution of the Conética Bulletin which relates to ethical issues, and Ethos magazine, also related to the study and discussion of ethics, both provided by Puerto Rico Ethics Office.
- The Golden Bow Ceremony (Ceremonia del Lazo Dorado in Spanish) is celebrated during Ethics Week where golden bows are distributed as a reminder of the adherence to ethical standards.
- The Puerto Rico Ethics Office provides a list of courses and workshops offered island wide.
- Further activities include viewing movies dealing with ethical conflicts for analysis and discussion. During the academic year 2009-2010 movies such as Training Day, Catch Me If You Can, Runaway Jury, and North Country were viewed.
- The Library also contributes by offering the following workshops to students:
  - Los Derechos de Autor y la Investigación (Copyright Laws and Research)
  - La Ley de Derechos de Autor (Copyright) y el Plagio (Copyright Laws and Plagiarism)

The Institutional Discipline Committee is in charge of dealing with ethical and disciplinary norms and procedures, and faculty–student relationship, Article 2 of the UPR Student General By-Laws (2.10), August 29, 2009. Chapter II, Section A, B, C, Chapter IV, Article 4.8, and Chapter VI, Parts A-E discuss issues such as student discipline, grievance procedures, student’s right to freedom of expression, student’s evaluation, sexual harassment, illicit drug use, plagiarism, and student’s ethical rights and responsibilities.

Our institution adheres to the policies and regulations regarding integrity as addressed in the UPR General By-Laws and supports the implementation of policies such as:
o Academic and intellectual freedom: Articles 11 and 32 of the UPR General By-Laws. The faculty exercises academic and intellectual freedom with responsibility and respect for diversity and human dignity. Faculty, students, and non-faculty employees strive to maintain the institutional climate required for its exercise without undue limitations.

o Fair and impartial practices in hiring faculty and equal employment opportunity as described in Article 29, Sections 29.1-29.5 and Article 31, evaluation measures are described in Article 45. Article 75 addresses recruitment of non faculty staff.

o Formal and equitable procedures for student admission, and for selection, evaluation, and promotion of its teaching and non-faculty personnel are strictly followed.

o Institutional policies (2.11) on sexual harassment, drugs and alcohol, security, copyright Law, non-smoking policy, and Inventions, among others.

o Administrative Procedure Act (2.13) – In Puerto Rico, the Administrative Procedure Act is known as Uniform Administrative Procedure and is found in Title 3, chapter 75 of Laws of Puerto Rico. According to 3 L.P.R.A. § 2101, agencies should establish rules and procedures for the informal solution of matters submitted for their consideration.

o The Student Ombudsperson - Students who have a problem with a professor, a college official, or administrator, and fail to resolve their grievances through regular administrative channels may have recourse to the Student Ombudsperson. This individual is a college functionary designated by the Chancellor, and operating under his supervision, whose main responsibility is to represent the interest of the student when a seemingly valid claim is presented. The Ombudsperson is expected to help find a satisfactory solution to the parties involved in a problem without recurring to strict regulatory procedures or formalities.
STANDARD 2: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL. Planning is an ongoing process that develops objectives to achieve them, 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 support the development and change necessary to improve and maintain institutional quality.

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the previous chapter, the mission statement provides a sense of purpose and direction for University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UPRAg) planning and decision making processes. Strategic planning is a dynamic process that implies the participation of key personnel and structures as well as specific implementation and operational plans that are continuously revised as a result of both formal and informal assessment practices. Central Administration instituted a planning process to produce a UPR Systemic Strategic Plan, which was finally approved in 1996, as established in Certification 25-1996-97 (3.1) of the Board of Trustees. This plan served as a framework for guiding the strategic planning processes of the eleven units that comprise the UPR System. Each of the units was charged with developing its own Strategic Plan in consonance with the systemic one where:

- Each institutional unit collaborated in the process of analyzing their corresponding strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. Internal and external environmental scanning was carried out by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR); faculty and non faculty staff focus groups were also valuable resources during this process.
- As a result of this effort, Strategic Plan was finally produced.
- Based on the institution’s mission and goals, this plan defined a series of critical factors to improve institutional effectiveness, as well as strategic directions to address them.
- As part of the Strategic Plan, an annual action plan was developed for the implementation of strategies in each area, as well as corresponding evaluation criteria.

The UPRAg’s Strategic Plans (2.2) give direction to the current institutional planning and the allocation of resources. Specific academic and administrative decisions which are made every semester are guided by the Strategic Plan and are embedded within the critical issues expressed in the document. ((Further discuss in Chapter 10).
PLANNING

The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla leadership has consistently appointed different committees and subcommittees to ensure constituent participation in the planning process. Institutional leadership, faculty, non-faculty staff, and students are represented in these groups. As with the approval process of the mission statement, the university stakeholders actively participated in the development and approval of the Strategic Plan through public hearings, focal groups and departmental and office meetings. UPRAg’s Strategic Plan is aligned with the UPR System Planning Agenda (2.3) called “Ten for the Decade”, and with the findings and recommendations of the 2005 Self Study (3.2) and Periodic Review Report (3.3) submitted to the Puerto Rican Council of Higher Education (PRCHE) and the Standards of Excellence of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

- In 1995 a five-year strategic planning cycle was initiated producing our first strategic plan: Strategic Plan: 1995-2000, (3.4)
- In the year 2000, another strategic planning cycle resulted in the Strategic Plan: 2000-2005. (3.5). After an exhaustive assessment of these plans, (3.6) we are now in the final stages of the third strategic planning cycle, which produce the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan, (3.7)
- This plan was approved by the academic senate in 2006 and revised in 2007, with the purpose of aligned our plan with the System Planning Agenda, (3.8) following the principles of the UPRAg Mission, Goals and Objectives.
- The communication strategies that inform university constituents about the strategic planning and reaccreditation process included the publication of the activities of the Self-Study Steering Committee Web Site, (3.37) Academic Senate meetings and Letters of Commitments from the Chancellor.

The Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) has been developing Annual Action Plans (2.6) in order to accomplish goals and missions of the Strategic Plan through the development of specific objectives and activities. Following the model of the OPIR Annual Action Plans.

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1 OIPR: Institutional planning and research is the main responsibility of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR). This office is headed by a director which responds directly to the Chancellor. The office is divided into five divisions: Planning, Statistics and Reports, External Resources, Institutional Research and Equal Employment Opportunity. The director is completely in charge of the planning functions and oversees the work of the other divisions.
Action Plan each Dean (Academic, Administrative, and Student) and the offices (Budget, OPIR, Alumni, CETEM) under the Chancellor’s Office, develops an internal planning document called Unit Plans that are going to be explained with more details later in this Chapter. The strategic agenda is further promoted through the Executive Committee (Chancellor, Deans and OPIR Director) monthly meetings.

The fourth cycle of strategic planning (2012-2017), starts with the assessment of the Strategic Plan 2006-2011. Another important reference document is “Ten for the Decade” which identifies desirable parameters of institutional life for the University of Puerto Rico in the years to come and defines the university’s commitment to achieving its goals. Provide new concepts to conceptualize a more tempered university to modern times, and is based in these principles:

**Figure 3.1 UPR System Strategic Agenda Principles**
The Strategic Planning Agenda “Ten for the Decade” is subject to continuing assessment process to facilitate the implementation and operationalization of the goals and principles. The latest assessment methods were called “Operational Lines”. These methods are further discussed in Chapter 10. The current Strategic Plan of the UPR at Aguadilla outlines 10 goals that address the following key areas and also aligned with the System Planning Agenda.

Table 3.1 Key areas and critical issues aligned with Ten for the Decade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UPRAg Key Areas</th>
<th>Critical Issues</th>
<th>“Ten for the Decade” Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Academic Assessment Culture | o Ensure educational alternatives related to the needs of the Puerto Rican Society.  
o Focus on learning assessment process and the periodic evaluation of the academic offerings.  
o Achieve accreditation or professional recognition from accredited external agencies, for those programs susceptible to those actions. | Academic Culture of Currency Experimentation and Renewal  
A Culture of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation  
Strengthened Institutional identity. |
| Global Perspective | o Teaching practice should be framed in a global context.  
o The institution need to contribute more to international discussions and co-participate in studies that are relevant to the international community that shares similar interests as the island. | Dedication to the Integration of the University into the World at Large  
Strengthened Institutional Identity |
| Human Resource Development | o Maintained an effective and aggressive professional development program for both faculty and non-faculty staff. | All principles depend on adequate intellectual and technical skills development. |
| Commitment with the Students | o Institutional commitment to the comprehensive development of our students and to provide them efficient services.  
o The academic offerings are well balance between the disciplines of general education and specific major disciplines.  
o Provide an extracurricular program that contributes to the intellectual and cultural development of students and focus on the student support services programs. | Sustained Ties to the Student Body  
Academic Culture of Currency Experimentation and Renewal |
| Computer and Information Technologies | o Institutionalize the Center for Educational Technologies in Multimedia (CETEM) to support the integration of the Technology into the courses and curriculum with emphasis in the training of faculty and students.  
o Prepare a five-year plan for the implementation of the IT initiative. | Academic Culture of Currency Experimentation and Renewal  
Technological Currency |
| Research and Erudite Work | o Importance of the research and scholarly work to contribute to the solution of important social problems and as a component of the learning process. | Competitive Research, Investigation and Creative Work |
INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLAN

All academic departments, administrative offices and student services annually submit their operational plans of action to their respective Deans and later the Director of OPIR prepares the Institutional Annual Action Plan based on plans of the departments and offices. The design of the action plans and annual reports, allows the integration of planning and institutional assessment in all academic and administrative units. These reports are linked to the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, which is aligned to the System Planning Agenda “Ten for the Decade”, so we can determine the degree of achievement of goals and therefore, the effectiveness of the budgetary distribution.
The purpose of this plan is to guide the efforts of the different units in achieving the departmental and institutional goals.

The Plan sets out objectives, activities, staff responsibilities and performance indicators. At the end of the academic year, departments and offices assess their Action Plans, submitting annual reports to their respective Deans.

The Deans present the most outstanding outcomes of the Departments and Offices to the Office of Planning and Institutional Research.

The Director of OPIR prepares the Institutional Annual Report (3.9) based on the reports of the Deans. The Institutional Report shows the effectiveness of the UPR at Aguadilla in achieving their goals and objectives.

Program Accreditation Initiative (Action Plan: Goal 1 Objective 1.2, page 2) (3.10)

The UPR-Aguadilla adopted the policy to establish external professional accreditation for those academic programs for which such accreditations are available. The policy extends to support programs and entities such as professional counseling and the Library. At the UPR at Aguadilla this process has already accomplish the accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) for the Education and English Departments and by the The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) for the Business Administration program. In addition, the Orientation and Counseling Department is in progress of the accreditation of its counseling services by the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) and the Library was assessed and received positive recognition by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in June 2007..

Information technology initiative (Action Plan: Goal 4 Objective 4.1 to 4.6)

Information and Educational Technologies is one of our emphasis areas. To this end, the institution has allocated human and fiscal resources to improve administrative processes and incorporate the use of technology in the teaching-learning process. The Human Resources Office

2 The Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) work with the programs accreditation coordinators to assure that all the information provided is reliable and verifiable with the institutional official data. OPIR also developed surveys and statistical data that the program needs in order to address the different standards of the institutions' accreditation. The OPIR is also involved in the dissemination and report of the status of the programs and the offices accreditation initiatives
developed a training plan for administrative and student support personnel with the purpose of integrate the information technologies as tools. During the academic year of 2008-2009, four workshops were offered to the staff and in the year 2009-2010 five workshops were offered. Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan specifically indicates the activities and a plan of improvements to the wired and wireless network replace outdated equipment, expand resources, development of tools for online instruction and skills development focused on faculty, students, services and processes.³

- The aspects for the Information Technology Plan (3.11) Goal stated in the Strategic Plan have been delegated to the Director of the Office for Information Technology (OTI) and the Director of the Center for Educational Technologies in Multimedia (CETEM).
- The Plan focused on continuing the development of technological infrastructure of the facility and the integration of technologies for offering courses, learning and services to students.

The Office for Information Technology has CISCO (3.12) programs to evaluate the effective use of the network. Thus, the Director of the Office of Information Technology determines what and how equipment is replaced and has the responsibility of purchasing any equipment to keep the network working. Currently, about 90% of the campus has wireless connection. In buildings where there is no wireless network, there is a traditional connection. In most areas at the Institution, such as the cafeteria, library, student center, as well as other areas, there is a wireless network available for Internet access. The following table shows the budget allocated to the Center of Information Technology and CETEM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OTI</td>
<td>$388,418</td>
<td>$552,978</td>
<td>$610,871</td>
<td>$660,373</td>
<td>$640,423</td>
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<tr>
<td>CETEM</td>
<td>$102,000</td>
<td>$105,552</td>
<td>$115,037</td>
<td>$243,021</td>
<td>$131,225</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$490,418</td>
<td>$658,530</td>
<td>$725,908</td>
<td>$903,394</td>
<td>$771,678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ The Title V project, approved in 2001 by the U.S. Department of Education, supported the acquisition of equipment and learning materials focused on the integration of the technology to the academic courses. After the project ended, the UPR in Aguadilla identified funds to institutionalize the project with the name of Center for Educational Technologies in Multimedia (CETEM). This center has been assigned a quota for the purchase of equipment, materials and payment of student assistants for the academic computer labs. The academic computer labs have the facilities of computers, printers, scanners and Internet access for student use.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION

To achieve the goals and objectives set at the UPRAg, resources are carefully allocated so that they are aligned with the Strategic Plan. The resources available in the UPR at Aguadilla are rather limited so this process is subject to an exhaustive analysis.

- Within the financial framework of the university, management allocates resources in a way that meets the goals and objectives established in the Strategic Plan.
- Every year the Chancellor and his/her team decide on how the resources are distributed; linking financial resources to the objectives and goals of the Institutional Strategic Plan.
- This distribution is pinned to the performance indicators which are addressed in the annual reports of the deanships and departments. Thus, assessing whether resources were effective or whether it needs to strengthen through a request for more resources.
- Each work unit is responsible for achieve the objectives set, using resources effectively. When the objectives are achieved, this information is divulged through newsletters, annual reports, websites, (3.13) among others, and the community is informed about the achievements that have been obtained.

Linking the planning and resource allocation

Addressing how the mission and goals guide decisions related to planning and resource allocation requires an understanding of the budgeting process. The University of Puerto Rico is a system composed by a Central Administration and a series of campuses and Colleges. The Puerto Rican Legislature approved in 1966 a “formula” by which approximately 9.66% of the average total amount of the two previous years of government revenues that goes to the general fund is assigned to the UPR System.

Although that process gives the University of Puerto Rico a budget stability nevertheless it is directly linked to the capacity of the government to received the revenues that they projected. Based on the Certification number 100-2005-06 of the Board of Trustees, the President in collaboration with the chancellors of the campuses and colleges present to the Puerto Rican legislature the budget for the UPR System. Upon approval, the Central Administration manage the allocation of this budget according to the priorities already presented by each unit.
When the total budget has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees, funds from the University General Fund are assigned to the UPR-Aguadilla.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Chancellor is allowed to redistribute the approved funds. These redistributions or adjustments require explicit alignment between the institutions’ stated goals and objectives, as included in the Strategic Plan. (3.14)

At Chancellor’s request, and with the UPR President approval, funds are possible from reserve accounts such as matching funds required by Federal or State grants, negotiated increases in salaries and fringe benefits, any emergency, accreditation initiatives, etc. Because of these additional funds, on average, the revised budget at the end of the fiscal year is about 7% higher than the assigned budget at the beginning, except for the last two fiscal years given the economic constraints.

Figure 3.2: UPRAg’s Assign and Adjusted Budget by Fiscal Years.

The 2006-2011 Strategic Plan include a Budget Projection Section (VI) (3.15) that has a 5-year Budget Forecast for every major goal of the Plan. In addition to the Operating Budget and
with prior approval, capital improvement funds can be assigned to the units by the Board of Trustees to the institution proposed projects and they are included in the University of Puerto Rico Capital Improvement Plan.

INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

Renewal is defined as the improvement of educational quality, the enhancement of effective teaching and learning, and the improvement of the quality and efficiency of educational and administrative support services. As outcomes results become available, they must be analyzed to verify how the institution can best direct its attention to achieving its strategic goals. The responsibilities for institutional improvement are clearly assigned and stated in the duties and responsibilities of institutional leadership and governance, as established in UPR General By-Laws.

The activities and processes which involve the different offices are under constant assessment and adapting new and better processes. Each Dean (Academic, Administration and Student) outline an action plan earlier in the year using the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.

- The Executive Committee is the body created at the level of the Chancellor’s Office and composed of the Deans and the Director of the Planning and Institutional Research Office.
- This committee meets monthly to discuss both the progress and existing challenges in relation to the achievement of the goals of the deanships. It maintains the flow of communication open between the Deans and the Offices to ensure compliance with the activities that achieve the institutional goals and objectives.
- At the end of the year, every office director submits a status report of the goals left to achieve as well as the achievements reached by the deans. This exercise is performed near the deadline date for filing the budget requests so as to analyze what activities they can allocate more funds to ensure the continuity of the activities for the next fiscal year.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES (Standard 3)

As mentioned in a previous section, the UPR-Aguadilla Strategic Plan and the Systemic “Ten for the Decade” Planning Agenda guide the effective use of institutional resources in the
context of the UPRAg’s Mission and Goals. The objective of this chapter is to document and assess for adequacy, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the UPRAg’s methods of analyzing the good use of its resources.

Financial Resources

As one of its responsibilities established By-Law the Board of Trustees annually approves and certifies each of the UPR unit’s budget allocations, based on each unit’s recommendation. The UPR System receives its funds mostly from legislative appropriations as stipulated by law. Each year, approximately 9.66% of the average total amount of the two previous years of government revenues is assigned to the UPR System. However, as a result of the global recession which, according to Puerto Rico Planning Board figures, started impacting the Island’s economy since 2006, the government appropriations have steadily declined and currently reflect a reduction of approximately 14% in tax revenues which aggravates central government’s deficit. Consequently, the UPR budget confronts a proportional decline for the current and upcoming fiscal years.

Budgeting

Although the Certification number 100-2005-06 (3.16) for requesting funds and allocating resources may vary from one year to another, the institution has established a systematic annual budget request cycle during the past five years. This process requires departments and offices to plan for the upcoming year’s activities and request the necessary funds to develop them.

These requests are carefully reviewed by the Chancellor and his/her staff to ensure that the limited resources are allocated effectively and consistently with institutional plans. In case of budget limitations, like the current conditions, the Chancellor analyzes the budget with the Budget Director and his/her executive staff in order to identify specific areas to reduce cost. They develop a plan with recommendations for budget redistribution and submit it to the Administrative Board for approval.
The operational budget by June 30 increased in 7% for the fiscal years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, from this fiscal year the percentage amount fell down in -2% from the fiscal year 2009-2010.

Table 3.3 ADJUSTED BUDGET BY PROGRAM
The distribution of the operational budget by program shows that Instruction always has had a major emphasis and budget distribution, because this is the area that summarizes the UPRAg’s mission as an institution. More than half of the budget is distributed between instruction and auxiliary educational services. In spite of the budgetary limitation that UPR Aguadilla always has faced, its main priority is to support the quality of the educational services our students receive.

Table 3.4: COMPARISON ADJUSTED OPERATING BUDGET BY OBJECT CODE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entries</th>
<th>Adjusted 05-06</th>
<th>Adjusted 06-07</th>
<th>Adjusted 07-08</th>
<th>Adjusted 08-09</th>
<th>Adjusted 09-10</th>
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<tr>
<td>SALARIES, WAGES, OTHERS</td>
<td>$13,701,891</td>
<td>$14,637,791</td>
<td>$15,387,387</td>
<td>$15,796,441</td>
<td>$15,734,371</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSTITUTIONAL EXPENSE</td>
<td>$4,992,564</td>
<td>$5,404,672</td>
<td>$5,765,399</td>
<td>$5,728,762</td>
<td>$5,847,289</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES</td>
<td>$1,531,682</td>
<td>$1,652,723</td>
<td>$1,878,480</td>
<td>$1,830,478</td>
<td>$1,504,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES</td>
<td>$58,356</td>
<td>$70,155</td>
<td>$89,313</td>
<td>$63,183</td>
<td>$52,166</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQUIPMENT</td>
<td>$610,931</td>
<td>$603,375</td>
<td>$488,949</td>
<td>$728,492</td>
<td>$517,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSFERRED FUNDS</td>
<td>$812,288</td>
<td>$810,130</td>
<td>$779,000</td>
<td>$811,477</td>
<td>$734,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$21,707,712</td>
<td>$23,178,846</td>
<td>$24,388,528</td>
<td>$24,958,833</td>
<td>$24,390,032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The constant in the operational budget, is that 86% is for covering personnel actions, (salaries and fringe benefits). For the last five years the percentage for these two lines had change between 86% in fiscal year 2005-2006 to 89% in 2009-2010. An important factor that has an impact is the already negotiated union labor agreements that extend for a period of three years.

Given the fiscal crisis, in the last years the UPR Aguadilla had to freeze administrative vacant positions. By freeze we mean vacant positions that can’t be fill because the position doesn’t has budget assigned to it. From the fiscal year 2010-2011 UPR began to freeze the vacant educational positions. In spite of these actions due to the budgetary decreases, in percentage terms salaries and fringe benefits have a bigger percentage than previous years not because we have more personnel but because the operational total budget diminished.
Current Fiscal Situation Overview

Planning and Budgeting are critical to obtain institutional goals and at the same time maintain financial stability. As a result of the present financial circumstances the Board of Trustees, took the required decisions that allow the System to adjust to the funds available to the University. University constituents became aware and were part of the decision making process. The UPR System must guarantee the integrity of the institution with the necessary budget adjustments.

From the fiscal years 2008-2009 a decrease in the income received from the Government was reflected. In this year a series of control measures from the Office of the UPR President ( R-0809-14, R-0809-16 ). An extension of those precautionary measures was also prepared by the UPR President in July 2010 with the letter R-0910-15. Those letters established expenses control to all the units. Some of these measures required the:

1. Control of personnel actions.
2. Freeze administrative vacant positions.
3. Control of equipment and materials purchases.
4. Control of travels outside of Puerto Rico.
5. Elimination of cellular and credit cards.
6. Reduction in the number of vehicles.
7. Efficient and moderate use of energy.
8. Efficient and moderate use of photocopiers and consumables.
9. Elimination of the vacation day’s excess payment.

Table 3.5 present also a series of certifications of the Board of Trustees that, given the economic constraints, adopt other control measures. In the fiscal year 2009-2010 the operational budget of the University of Puerto Rico, had a decrease of the revenues that it received from the Government, specifically those assigned by the 1966 Law (Formula 9.6%). This decrease of income totals $110,826,897.00. During the same fiscal year the University System received $105 million from the ARRA Funds (American Recovery and Reinvestment ACT). These ARRA Funds allowed the UPR to continue operate within the Operational Budget without a drastic decrease of funds.

The 2010-2011 presents even bigger challenges to the UPR System. For this fiscal year there was an additional income decrease from the Government of $32,790,103 with the aggravant that the UPR will only receive $15 million from the ARRA Funds.
As a result during the present fiscal year 2010-2011 the University of Puerto Rico faces a major budgetary fund cut. The total decrease in funds for the University System is **$105,617,138.00**. The Operational Budget of the University of Puerto Rico for the fiscal year 2010-2011 is **$935,038,000**. The budgetary cuts decreased UPR Aguadilla's operational budget for this fiscal year by **$3,549,600.00**. This is approximately 14.73 % decrease in comparison with the fiscal year 2009-2010. UPRAg’s current operational budget is $20,386,520.00. Aguadilla's operational budget is approximately 2 % of the total Operational Budget of the University System.

Figure 3.4 Operational Budget by Program 2010-2011

As mention before, half of UPR Aguadilla’s budget is at the Instruction Program; therefore the quality of the education our students received is not negatively impacted.

**UPR-Aguadilla Action Plan**

The present financial circumstances will require the cooperation from all sectors of the University community. Reductions in expenses identified as non-essential, and identification of additional funding sources is essential. Presently, the University Administration is implementing a number of options to confront the budget decline. The UPR-Aguadilla Action Plan to preserve compliance with Standard 3 has two main dimensions: (1) Secure continuity and institutional
effectiveness with available resources and; (2) Maintain and nurture additional sources of funding to continue advancing institutional education, service and research priorities.

**Secure Continuity and Institutional Effectiveness**

The UPR-Aguadilla will implement internal measures to assure the continuity of all operations that support the institution’s Mission, Goals, and Objectives. Among the strategies to improve efficiency in the use of human and fiscal resources to implement are as follows:

1. More effective use of the technologies available.
2. Redistribution or consolidation of administrative tasks.
3. More effective use of facilities for nights and weekends courses.
4. Reduction of energy consumption through acquisition of energy-efficient equipment and the submission of proposals for energy saving projects.

**Current actions**

Fiscal measures were taken as a result of the budget reduction for the 2010-2011 fiscal years. As mentioned before the university budget was reduced due to the overall deficit the Government of Puerto Rico faces.

The Board of Trustees, as seen in the following table, took the necessary actions that allow the UPR System to adjust to the funds available to the University. As a result and to cope with the fiscal crisis, a series of certifications were emitted by the Board of Trustees to achieve substantial cost reductions.

**Table 3.5: Certifications 2009-2010 of the Board of Trustees:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Number</th>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="3.17" /></td>
<td>Frozen (moratorium) salaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="3.18" /></td>
<td>Adoption of Budget 2010-2011. Includes providing stating that the maximum number per section is 30 students, if the room provides for a...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
greater capacity should increase the number of students per section as long as they comply with the proper regulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>137 3.19</td>
<td>Promotions in rank, the process of evaluation and adjudication a new rank to the faculty will continue, but the monthly payment of the new salary scale will not be process until funds be available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138 3.20</td>
<td>Reduction of 5% in the reduction of Chancellors and Deans salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139 3.21</td>
<td>Elimination of special summer funds for faculty ($475).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140 3.22</td>
<td>Elimination of the special bonus to non-faculty employee’s member of HEEND ($420).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141 3.23</td>
<td>Elimination of the perquisite of the Union ($45/m).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142 3.24</td>
<td>Reduction of 5% on compensations for faculty members in administrative duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143 3.25</td>
<td>5% reduction in the payment of compensation for additional courses given by faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144 3.26</td>
<td>Elimination of the perquisites of the Chancellors and the President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146 3.27</td>
<td>Establishment of Special Stabilization Fund ($800.00 fee per student).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153 3.28</td>
<td>Elimination of payment for excess sick leaves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UPR-Aguadilla face a budget panorama that is going to create institutional challenges for the next three academic years, as projected.

*Figure 3.5: UPR-Aguadilla's Budget Projections for Fiscal Years 2009-10 through 2011-2012*
A summary of the budget distribution resulting from the five year financial plan, are presented below.

**Table 3.6: Budget distribution by General Ledger format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPR Aguadilla General Fund</strong></td>
<td>$20,386,520</td>
<td>$19,393,433</td>
<td>$20,056,828</td>
<td>$20,508,407</td>
<td>$20,974,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Instruction</td>
<td>10,160,456</td>
<td>9,665,510</td>
<td>9,996,141</td>
<td>10,221,203</td>
<td>10,453,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Academic Support</td>
<td>2,009,507</td>
<td>1,911,618</td>
<td>1,977,009</td>
<td>2,021,521</td>
<td>2,067,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Student Services</td>
<td>2,069,965</td>
<td>1,969,131</td>
<td>2,036,489</td>
<td>2,082,341</td>
<td>2,129,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Institutional Support</td>
<td>3,444,376</td>
<td>3,276,590</td>
<td>3,388,673</td>
<td>3,464,969</td>
<td>3,543,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Maintenance of Facilities</td>
<td>2,702,216</td>
<td>2,570,584</td>
<td>2,658,516</td>
<td>2,718,373</td>
<td>2,780,111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.6 Budget Distribution Projection by Expenses Code (Data from table 3.6)**

The projected action plans and activities for Standard 3 look for:

- secure continuity and institutional effectiveness with available resources, and
- Maintain and nurture additional resources of funding to continue advancing institutional education, research and research priorities.

The projected budget increase for salaries and benefits is only $587,667 or 2.8% (see figure 3.6) from academic year 2010-11 to 2014-15. Although retirements of personnel are
projected during this period, adjustment needs to be made in order to maintain the institution educational quality and its related non-academic services.

**Action Plan for Securing Continuity and Institutional Effectiveness**

The Central Administration and the institutional units of the University of Puerto Rico are currently developing collaboratively the five-year financial projections (2010-2011 to 2014-2015) with updated external and internal parameters and a specific set of assumptions. Updated financial data and budgetary information regarding this matter will be included in the each unit’s Monitoring Reports due March 1, 2011. In compliance with Certification 100 (2005-2006) (3.37) of the Board of Trustees, each unit continues to monitor incomes and expenses for internal quarterly budget updates and to assure the best use of current financial information for decision-making.

The UPR at Aguadilla is aware that actions have to be taken for a more efficient and effective use of its limits resources, using more creative ways that allow the reduction and/or redistribution of the operational expenses. Those actions should be accompanied with alternatives to finance its programs and operations through external funds. Some of the initiatives that are going to be considered for a more efficient and effective uses of the funds available include:

- **Academic offerings:**
  - Course occupancy established at the maximum level permitted for each course type (Board of Trustees No. 135, 2009-10). (3.17) However, the structure of the classrooms should be considered as a limitation for these policies. Courses with occupancy of less than 75% will be consolidated up to the maximum level permitted. If consolidation is not possible it should be closed, except when the Registrar’s Office certifies that in that course and section students graduating during that particular academic session are enrolled.
  - Placed on moratorium those programs with a sustained low demand to its offer. To date, the Associate’s Degree in Quality Control (Certification No. 23, 2004-05 Board of Trustees) (3.29) the Associate’s Degree in Business Administration, the Associate Degree in Cooperative Business and the Associate Degree in Business Programming) (Certification No. 35, 2005-2006 Board of Trustees) (3.30) have
been placed on moratorium. Programs should demonstrate through documented evidence its pertinence within the guidelines established by the Board of Trustees’ Certification No. 43 (2006-2007). That evidence should allow the Administrative Board to make informed decisions regarding the importance of the program in attaining the UPR Aguadilla mission and goals. Those programs, which exhibit recurrent low demand, and demonstrate low programmatic effectiveness, must be placed on moratorium.

- Maintain and nurture additional sources of funding to continue advancing institutional education, service and research priorities.

The main goal of the second part of UPR at Aguadilla’s action plan for continued compliance with Standard 3 is to continue existing initiatives and develop new ones to increase and diversify sources of funding to support the accomplishment of the institutional missions and goals.

The financial situation of recent years has made it increasingly necessary for UPRAg to execute other strategies to obtain funds to complement government budgetary allocations. The university uses different strategies to increase its institutional resources to better support its missions and goals, and to help finance some of its institutional renewal initiatives. These resources include funding from state and federal agencies, as well as from private donors. External funds are mainly directed towards funding initiatives to improve the teaching learning processes. Some of our federal sponsors are Department of Education, NOAA, EPA. In addition to federal agencies sponsors the UPR Aguadilla receive competitive funds through state agencies and private foundations. The following table (Table 3.7) illustrates the trends in this area.
Table 3.7: External Resources Received by Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Funds</td>
<td>388,155</td>
<td>385,648</td>
<td>916,666</td>
<td>762,126</td>
<td>653,636</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Funds</td>
<td>4,594</td>
<td>13,744</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>6,830</td>
<td>32,509</td>
<td>38,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Funds</td>
<td>1,105,251</td>
<td>1,289,376</td>
<td>1,678,297</td>
<td>1,193,910</td>
<td>1,138,384</td>
<td>1,476,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$1,498,000</td>
<td>$1,688,768</td>
<td>$2,614,963</td>
<td>$1,962,866</td>
<td>$1,824,529</td>
<td>$2,215,172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action Plan for Maintaining and Nurturing Additional Sources of Funding

The following are some of the specific actions that the UPR at Aguadilla is implementing:

- Strengthen the Continued Education Department and Professional Studies Division (DECEP) and the Evening Program (UNA). The profile is changing towards a student that works and studies with irregular hours for studying. The evening and Saturday options will be an alternative for a more efficient use of the facilities. This is an opportunity for the Campus to present to the community more programs leading to degrees in that timeframe. With the goal of improving the fiscal condition, another institutional priority will be to increase student registration. This growth is projected for non-traditional populations (populations that are not from high schools) to be served by the UNA. The programs offered by DECEP and UNA are self-sustained. This means that the registration fees should cover the operational expenses and does not impact the budget that comes from the general state fund.

- Reengineering offices, positions and tasks:
  - All the offices and tasks will be evaluated for possible redistribution or consolidation to make more efficient use of human resources within the number of administrative personnel that the institution has.
  - Positions will be revised, reclassified or if needed eliminated.
As a result of the continuous fiscal challenges faced by UPRAg, this institution has developed a strong financial discipline, which has become part of the institution’s financial management policy. Budget distribution, carefully revise financial planning strategies, and identification of creative ways to achieve operating efficiency will play a critical role in helping the university fulfill its missions and goals.

The Aguadilla campus has made great strides towards maintaining its financial position during the past decade. Even with the low budget appointed to UPR Aguadilla we’ve been able to maintain high institutional effectiveness levels. Planning and budgeting cohesiveness were critical to achieve high institutional effectiveness standards.

**Relation between Planning, Budgeting, and Institutional Renewal**

Assessment at the institutional level, further explain in Chapter 10, has been built into the operational requirements of every unit of the UPR at Aguadilla by virtue of the planning and reporting processes themselves. All directors are required to submit an Annual Action Plan linked to the Strategic Plan. When submitting their annual reports the deans and directors are required to integrate the information collected from their units and present their accomplishments using the “indicators of success” from their Action Plans as criteria. The information gathered from the annual reports and other sources is what facilitates the budgetary assignments. The degree of accomplishment determines the adequacy of the budget. The academic and administrative directors are expected to request and justify their operating funds, based on these results.

**Information Technology Resources**

Over the last decade, technology integration has been a central focus at the UPR-Aguadilla, since the approval of a Title V Proposal in 2001 for the development of a Multimedia Educational Technology Center (CETEM). Since 2006 the CETEM is funded by the UPR-Aguadilla’s operational budget. The Center provides IT based training primary for faculty and students. The Center also provides support to faculty driven projects, for educational improvement using multimedia technology, assists the faculty on instructional development, promotes online course developments, provides technical assistance, and academic guidance on the pedagogical applications of IT.
The UPR-Aguadilla’s computer network is an optical fiber system connected to the UPR-System’s network through a T1 line. It now transmits at speeds between 10 and 100 Mbps, but if required, it may be upgraded to operate at higher speeds. During the past years a wireless network – with 14 receiver units distributed throughout the campus– has also been developed. Almost 100% of high student traffic areas have wireless access. Equipment to improve both the optical fiber and wireless networks was acquired thanks to a special assignment of $90,978 provided by the UPR Central Administration as part of its institutional effort to improve IT capabilities within the UPR. In the Information Technology Office (OTI, Spanish acronym for Oficina de Tecnología de Información) nine Windows-based servers are connected to the UPR.net and, through this network, to the Internet. These servers are dedicated to the support of academic and administrative processes as well as website and email management.

From the technical side, most information technology services in the College are provided by the Office of Information Technology (OTI). This office is headed by a Director which responds directly to the Chancellor. Both, administrative and academic computing services are provided by OTI. The administrative services are provided through the Computer Center which is staffed by one IT specialist, a programmer, a technician, and three operators. The Academic Laboratories are attended by a group of six technicians, directly supervised by the IT Director.

**Information Technology Investment**

In 2005-2006, there were 770 computers in the institution, 44% for academic computing, 23% for faculty use, 3% for library searches, 3% for library instruction, and 27% for administrative use. The total estimated amount invested in IT equipment since the year 2006 ($3.32) was $1,254,078. ($1,018,778 for academic use and $235,300 for administrative use)
The Library

The Enrique A. Laguerre library provides resources and support services in information searches for the entire university community. It was evaluated favorably by the ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries) and its web page is one of the most complete in the UPR system. On this page, students, faculty and people outside of the university, can access databases, online catalogues, and electronic reserves, among other services. It provides a virtual reference area where users can ask questions, which will be answered by a professional librarian. The tables (3.9, 3.10, and 3.11) indicate the amount of resources available in the library for the use of the university community.

Table 3.8 Library holdings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>34,048</td>
<td>36,299</td>
<td>31,889</td>
<td>34,116</td>
<td>32,328</td>
<td>34,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>5,269</td>
<td>9,433</td>
<td>4,269</td>
<td>7,795</td>
<td>4,320</td>
<td>7,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>13,393</td>
<td>2,336</td>
<td>13,627</td>
<td>2,370</td>
<td>13,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aguadillana</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Literature</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrique Laguerre</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>1,452</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>1,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Books</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>43,079</td>
<td>61,505</td>
<td>40,179</td>
<td>58,062</td>
<td>40,766</td>
<td>58,483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.9 Printed journals collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Actives</th>
<th>Inactive</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.10 Electronic printed journals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Journals in Data Bases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Unique Titles</td>
<td>34,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicated Titles</td>
<td>44,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Titles</td>
<td>79,026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The library has a building of 44.083 square feet including 12 study rooms, 8 computer labs, an instructional room, a teleconference room, a multimedia production center, 8 offices and a conference hall with 100 seats. The staff includes (a) Director (a), 5 professional librarians, 7 assistant librarians and 6 administrative staff. A short-term goal is to convert one of the laboratories into a common information center so that the integration of searching for information, accessing databases and writing up the work can take place in one area. With this, the service offered to the student is more complete. It also has available printers and photocopiers for use by faculty and students. Its budget has remained constant in support of maintaining its current resources.

Table 3.11 Library and audiovisual budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Total Adjusted Budget</th>
<th>Funds for Acquisitions</th>
<th>Audiovisual Adjusted Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Library Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Books &amp; Subscriptions</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>$ 756,076</td>
<td>$ 130,548</td>
<td>$ 19,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>$ 1,062,640</td>
<td>$ 129,248</td>
<td>$ 18,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>$ 1,138,186</td>
<td>$ 130,548</td>
<td>$ 17,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>$ 1,255,803</td>
<td>$ 131,793</td>
<td>$ 18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>$ 1,313,519</td>
<td>$ 163,974</td>
<td>$ 20,147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Since the introduction of a new financial information system (UFIS) at the UPR, the audiovisual assigned budget was included as part of the library budget.
Physical Facilities

The UPR at Aguadilla is located in northwestern Puerto Rico within the premises of the former Ramey Air Force Base in Aguadilla. It has 35 acres of land including green areas, buildings and parking lots. The following table shows the distribution of the enclosure in square feet.

Table 3.12 Distribution of physical space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Space</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Area (Square Feet)</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Area (Square Feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>30,820</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratories</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16,978</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual Lab</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,155</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>42,012</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>42,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18,231</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>44,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Use(1)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54,228</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>54,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8,708</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbies, stairs, corridors</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,337</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Spaces</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>198,469</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>226,133</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ongoing Projects

The UPR at Aguadilla recently acquired a new electrical substation that supplies power to the entire campus. Previously, the university lacked an efficient energy system and constantly had service interruptions affecting faculty, students, staff, student services and administrative staff. With the new sub-electrical station the university can maintain a pleasant environment for students, faculty, staff, student services and administrative staff; it also provides a stable energy system that extends the useful life of the electronic equipment.

A new classroom designed specifically for the music related courses is under construction. Three new offices were built for the Academic Affairs Deanship.
Master Plan

The UPR at Aguadilla approved a Facilities Master Plan, (3.33) (Certification 2008-09-27 Administrative Board). The Master Plan responds to the specific goal (8) of the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan and proposes the overall transformation of the facilities in a long term basis. The Master Plan was submitted to the President’s Office, for approval by the Board of Trustees, at which level funds are allocated.

Maintenance of Physical Facilities and Equipment

Our 2006-2011 Strategic Plan, specifically goal number 8 (3.34) (objective 8.3) establishes guidelines for the maintenance of facilities and equipment. Annually the Administrative Affairs Deanship is responsible for the implementation of the Facilities Maintenance and Minor Improvement Plan and activities.

Human Resources

Efficient management of human resources is fundamental for achieving optimal institutional performance. A total of 179 faculty members and 194 non-faculty personnel serve in diverse roles to support the learning related activities of the 3,076 students enroll in the campus.

- The faculty account for 46% of all UPR Aguadilla employees.
  - Eighty two percent (82%) of the faculty members are full-time employees of the institution, 64% of whom are tenured.
  - Full time faculty distribution by rank is as follows: 26% are Full Professors, 24% Associate Professors, 35% Assistant Professors, and 15% Instructors. Twenty three percent (23%) of the full-time faculty members possess a doctoral degree.
  - The regular courses load for faculty is 12 credits per semester and they tend approximately 625 sections of courses per semester.
  - Over the last five years the average of student-faculty ratio (in FTE) is 27:1. The procedures to assess the quality of faculty performance and other related data are explained in Chapter 6.
- Non faculty personnel account for 54% of all UPRAg’s employees.
Most are tenured, working full-time, and with academic preparation that in most cases is superior to the requirements of their position.

Like the faculty, they are positively related to the college and are committed to its well-being. As with the faculty, non-faculty personnel have received several salary increases over the past 5 years. On average, each individual has received an increase of $150/month.

The UPRAg has established a comprehensive professional improvement program for non-faculty personnel. They also have the opportunity to take credit courses in the College or other institutions. Employees may take up to 18 credit hours during a given semester. Seven of these may be during working hours, with no adverse effect on their vacation time or salary for the first four credits.

An estimated $11,500 was invested in non-faculty personnel development for year 2008-09. A significant number of training activities are not included in the estimate since not all require direct disbursement from the College.

Non-faculty personnel also participate in institutional projects, and in many institutional committees.

All regular employees of the University of Puerto Rico receive fringe benefits such as: retirement benefits, a comprehensive health insurance, a Christmas Bonus, leaves of absence for special reasons, and free tuition for themselves, their spouses, and legal dependants.

**Human Resources Development**

The continuous improvement of human resources is addressed in two areas: faculty and non-faculty employees. For each group the Chancellor allocates funds to meet the requests for professional development of faculty staff. The budget allocated for training and education is:

**Table 3.13 Budget for Personnel Training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$ 245,597</td>
<td>$ 530,118</td>
<td>$ 378,916</td>
<td>$ 203,260</td>
<td>$ 186,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Due to the reduction in the budget of the university, in recent years the allocations for licenses and financial aids have been limited. In addition, faculty may choose to seek promotion in rank, which is awarded based on a formula of points, which requires that the professor has contributed in the following areas: Creation and Dissemination, Professional Improvement, Participation in Committees, Dedication to the University and Community Work. Performance as an instructor in the classroom is subject to evaluations of students and peers. The recommendations are submitted to the UPRAg’s Administrative Board for approval. The decisions of the Administrative Board are based on the budget available for such purposes.

Policies and procedures to ensure the legal and ethical use of institutional resources

Management of financial resources

All funding, institutional as well as external, is administered in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and by-laws. A great diversity of by-laws and procedures regulate and help examine the use of both internal and external funds. The Finance Office administers the by-laws, regarding budgetary concerns and the way funds are spent. All financial related offices (Budget, Finance) function under these by-laws. All the audits are channeled through the Finance Office, which is the coordinator and liaison for both system-wide and state-sanctioned audits. Yearly external audits are performed by the Office of the Comptroller of Puerto Rico. Federal audits also take place as part of the federal funds obtained from different programs awarded by competitive proposals and Federal Funds. (Title V, Title IV, MSEIP, NFWF, EPA).

The Pre-intervention unit under the Finance Office is responsible for verifying that budget use, complies with laws, rules, and regulations issued by the University, the Campus, state and federal governments agencies and is the filter before a disbursement is made. To assure compliance with policies, this office revises and analyzes all financial transactions that require the use of public funds. To ensure adequate use of resources, rules and regulations have been adopted to govern procedures and disbursements. There is a wide range of regulations linked to the budget management guidelines established by the Board of Trustees.
The Office of Internal Audits performs periodic audits to verify if offices have complied with the pre-intervention rules and procedures set by the institution. The University of Puerto Rico is also audited every five years by the Comptroller’s Office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The UPRAg has been audited by the Comptroller Office and has satisfactorily met all the standards and criteria for healthy management practices. The external auditing firm Ernest & Young conducts annual audits of the financial statements of the University of Puerto Rico.

**Recruitment, Evaluation, and Dismissal Practices**

The University General Regulations establish deliberative, advisory and decision-making bodies and set uniform procedures, rules and guidelines to ensure fair and impartial recruitment and dismissals affording equal opportunity to candidates, and promotions based on merit. Although the By-Laws of the UPR do not allow it to bargain with an union, since 1972 (Certification No. 66, 1972-73) the Board of Trustees recognized two groups (UPR Worker’s Union and the HEEND) to bargaining the rules and procedures that guarantee the employees’ rights and govern contracts, promotions, and leaves. Certification No. 20, 2007-08 (3.35) present the current rules and working agreement between the UPR and the HEEND (acronyms for the Spanish “Hermandad de Empleados Exentos No Docentes”) Certification No. 56, 2005-06 (3.36) establish the current agreement between the University and the UPR Worker’s Union.

Recruitment of non-teaching personnel is coordinated by the Office of Human Resources, following the institutional recruitment policy set in the Recruitment System Administration Regulations for the UPR non-teaching personnel, Certification No. 93–110, (3.37) as amended. Evaluation of non-teaching personnel is based on objective criteria and is performed before tenure is granted. The university provides an appeal process to all employees or candidates for employment who feel that they may have been the object of practices that violate the principle of merit during the recruitment, retention, or evaluation process (General Regulations, 2002). (3.38)

Chapter 6 (Standard 10) further, discusses the recruitment process for teaching personnel.

**CONCLUSIONS**
During the past five years, the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) has established mechanism to assess institutional effectiveness. The 2006-2011 Strategic Plan has been aligned with the System planning Agenda to work cohesively to achieve institutional goals, objectives and mission. All the constituencies at the UPR Aguadilla has been collaborating and collaborating to achieve the mission, goals and objectives of the institution.

- The UPR Aguadilla has a mission statement and a Strategic Plan that guide decision-making and the design of operational plans.
- Financial procedures are clear and in full compliance with state and federal laws. The findings of the external and internal audits carryout at UPRAg demonstrate compliance.
- Strategic plan call for special emphasis on technology-enhanced teaching and learning, support for faculty to use technology in their teaching.
- A participative decision making process and consistent policies and procedures guide all resource allocation at UPRAg.
- There is evidence of strong development in the area of technology and telecommunication infrastructure.
- There are initiatives for physical development and the construction of new facilities.
- Our employees are fairly compensated and there is evidence that the intuition has invested in their professional development.
- The OPIR has a strong web based information site, also is the office with the technology and expertise in electronic data management, surveys and web surveys elaboration, statistical analysis processes and is a federal data clearinghouse.

Recommendations

- Strengthen of an External Resources Culture to obtain external funding and donations.
  Create an administrative position for external resources.
- Strengthen the assessment, planning, and resource allocation culture for a more efficient and effective use of resources.
- Reengineering the positions, responsibilities and task of the OPIR personnel, to adjust to the renew paradigm on assessment, evaluation and planning.
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 assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss a documented analysis of the institution’s system of governance in policy development and decision-making. It also addresses how well the administrative structure and services facilitates learning and research, fostered quality improvement, and supported the university’s organization and governance. In order to conduct a comprehensive self-study with special emphasis on information technology for instruction and learning, and professional program accreditation, this chapter includes pertinent information in this matter.

Leadership and Governance

The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UPRAg) is part of the University of Puerto Rico System, a large publicly supported multi-campus, co-educational university system. The Central Administration (UPR-CA), located at Río Piedras, oversees the operation of the eleven academic units, including UPRAg. The Board of Trustees is the highest governing and administrative body of the University of Puerto Rico System, and was created by the Government of Puerto Rico on June 16, 1993, under University Law Act number 16.

The University Law Act Number 1, January 20, 1966 (1.1), as amended) clearly states the university’s governing structure, including the composition, duties and responsibilities of each university constituent in the development of policies and in the decision-making process. The internal management of each Campus is governed by applicable disposition of law, UPR General By-Laws, and general applications complementary by-laws, as well as by resolutions adopted by the Board of Trustees, by the guidelines established by University President, and by the rules and regulations (4.1) adopted by each institutional governing body (4.2). Detailed data about the
regulations adopted, organized in the form of Certifications, by the Board of Trustees (4.3), the Academic Senate (4.4), and the Administrative Board (4.5) are available in their web pages.

**Figure 4.1 Organizational Chart UPR System**

The University of Puerto Rico is composed of a Board of Trustees, a Central Administration, a University Board, the institutional units, and those other units and offices created by law or by institution of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees formulates policy for the university’s system, guides its development, allocates its budget, and appoints the President and Chancellors. The President has the responsibility of leading the University System acts in representation of the Board of Trustees. In collaboration with the University Board, which he presides, coordinates and supervises the academic, administrative and financial tasks of the Institution.
The Central Administration issues circular letters from the Office of the President and regulations approved by the University Board. Regulations, approved by the Board of Trustees, deal with planning and development, budget, construction and conservation of physical facilities, capital improvements, finances, general hiring rules for the university, general student admission rules, etc. The University Board has the responsibility of maintaining an integrated university system through a planning process that responds to the university’s mission and goals. It is also charged with advising the President with regard to the academic, administrative, and financial progress of the units. These functions are carefully balanced to respect the autonomy of individual units.

**Assessment of Leadership and Governance**

The University Law, Section 3(e)(7) provides that the Board of Trustees shall evaluate the work of the President of the UPR and the Chancellors of the institutional units in terms not shorter than three and not longer than five years of their incumbency. This evaluation shall be in writing and becomes part of the corresponding Board of Trustees’ file. However, the Board of Trustees approved Certification No. 50, 2004-2005 (4.6), which defines the procedures to assess the performance of the Chancellors and the President with annual evaluations for feedback with the objective of improve and the triennial evaluation of performance with emphasis on results (effective and efficiency results.) The Chancellors evaluation will be made by the President with a report to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will assess the performance of the President.

As a complement of Certification No. 50, 2004-2005, our Academic Senate approved the Certification No. 12, 2008-2009 (4.7), Certification 13, 2008-09 (4.8) and Certification 18, 2008-09 (4.9) that set the procedures to assess the performance of the Chancellor of the UPRAg by their constituents. Certification 12 present the questionnaire to be completed by the three constituents groups: students, faculty and non-faculty employees and Certifications 13 and 18 with the procedures to be follow in the evaluation. The Committee of Academic Affairs of the Academic Senate will be in charge of the process.
Institutional Policies

The university community has access to information about policies, procedures, and governing documents. Every time a policy or procedure is changed or created, the administration must issue the appropriate certification. The University Administration effectively facilitates the UPRAg direction and operation by means of applicable policies (4.10), norms, certifications and memorandums according to Article 7 of the University Law. This Law guarantees to each campus a governmental system.

In case of conflicts, the Board of Trustees By-Laws is the ruling forces. The President of the University of Puerto Rico sets the policies. However, the Board of Trustees has to be documented in regards to policies (according to Article 5 and 6 of the General By-Laws). Whenever a public policy is set, be it academic or administrative, the UPR government has to guarantee the UPRAg autonomy (according to Article 10.1 of the General By-Laws of the University of Puerto Rico).

All certifications may be accessed through http://www.uprag.edu (4.11). Academic Senators present oral and written reports in the corresponding faculty and department meetings with the purpose to report important matters and certifications approved. Students are represented through the General Student Council. They are responsible to provide information to the student community through electronic media, meetings, assemblies, or posting on bulletin boards. Also, the University Police is in charge of the distribution of printed documents, memos, and letters at the main entrance of the UPRAg. Academic departments and student gathering areas receive copies of documents. All this process guarantees that the entire community is well informed.

The University Law No. 1 of January 20, 1966 (1.1)), as amended, defines the nature of each of the governing bodies: Article 3 for the Board of Trustees, Article 5 for the President, Article 6 for the University Board, Article 8 for the Administrative Board and Article 11 for the Academic Senate. The Law clearly said the a General By-Law will present the specific functions and limitations of the governing bodies. Article 7 of the UPR General ByLaw present the priorities of their norms and policies (preeación normative).
Sustain and improve the campus managers

In accordance to data provided by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, there is evidence of professional improvement of the managers of the UPR. For the academic year of 2007-2008, the Chancellor set a resource for the professional improvement of the managerial personnel. In accordance in the Goal 9 and 10 of the Agenda for Planning of UPR (2006-2016) all personnel was guaranteed access for development. (See appendix 4.12)

Participation of the university community in decision-making

The University Law, as amended (Law 16 of June 16, 1993) guarantees student and academic community participation in the governing bodies (The Academic Senate and the Administrative Board) and in the processes of decision-making of these bodies. Students’ representation is through the General Student Council. The General Student Council’s president and three members are elected by their peers. The election is carried out once a year.

The Chancellor call for ordinary and extraordinary meetings, whenever it is necessary. Through faculty meetings, its members express their opinions and concerns, according to the General By-Laws of the UPR.

A number of institutional committees function on a regular basis (e.g., IT-Information Technology, Library, Academic Achievement, and Bids Review) where as other is created by the Chancellor or the Deans when required for special purposes. The institutional and academic departments committees provide to the faculty and students the opportunity to participate and collaborate in decision making throughout the different levels. The Chancellor appoints the institutional committees (4.13), the Deans appoints for different committees in their Deaships (4.14) and the Head of the Academic Departments appoint for committees at their levels (4.15)
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.

Administrative Structure

The Aguadilla Campus organizational structure, human resources, and administrative services and processes are fully addressed at the attainment of the institution’s goals and objectives. The Board of Trustees regulates the internal organization of the institutional units. The Chancellor is the Campus top academic and administrative officer, and presides over its two deliberative bodies: the Administrative Board and the Academic Senate.

Management Staff

The administration officers of UPRAg, includes the Chancellors, the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Administrative Affairs and the Dean of Student Affairs. The UPRAg Senate consists of representatives of the UPRAg faculty, students and administration officers. The Dean of Academic Affairs heads the Academic Departments (10), the Library, CETEM, and Continuing Education and Professional Studies. The Dean of Administrative Affairs heads offices such as Finance, Human Resources, Physical Resources, Communication and Transportation, Reproduction Center, Office of Security, and the Document Administration Office. The Dean of Students Affairs heads the Guidance and Counseling Office, Admissions, Financial Aid, Medical Services, the Athletic Center, Social and Cultural Activities, the Student Center, and Quality of Life Office. The three Deans report directly to the Chancellor.

The Administrative Board is headed by the Chancellor, and is composed by the Deans for Academic, Student, and Administrative Affairs, academic department/faculty heads, representatives of the Academic Senate, and one student elected by his peers. It advises the Chancellor in administrative matters, including the distribution of the assigned budget, the academic calendar, faculty requests for leaves, tenures, financial aid, and promotions.

The Academic Senate is also headed by the Chancellor, and includes the Deans for Academic Affairs, Student, Administrative Affairs, academic department/faculty heads, elected
faculty member representatives from each academic department/faculty, the Director of the Library, and students elected by their peers. It serves as the official forum of the academic community for the discussion of issues related to the institution’s general course in matters related to academic affairs within the scope established by the University Law, rules and regulations. It also establishes the general guidelines for faculty appointments, tenure, promotion, evaluation, and leaves.

The President is an ex-officio member of all Administrative Boards and Academic Senates.

4.2 Organizational chart UPR Aguadilla
Policies and Procedures

University of Puerto Rico General Regulations defines each unit’s internal structure. The order of precedence applicable to laws, regulations, guidelines, resolutions, and procedures that govern all official actions taken on the Campus is the following: the provisions of any applicable laws; the University General Regulations; resolutions by the Board of Trustees; the Central Integral Development Plan; norms, guidelines, and resolutions, issued by the Office of the President; resolutions by the University Board; and the regulations of each institutional unit, according to its internal hierarchy.

Selection of Executive Personnel

The selection of administrative personnel is in accordance to their competencies, skills, degrees and training needed to carry out their responsibilities and functions. The qualifications and experience of the Chancellor, Deans and other level administrators are shown in their Curriculum Vitae. The administration and academic leaders of the university are qualified to carry out their specific responsibilities and functions.

The organizational chart of the campus presents a clear documentation of the lines of organization and authority. This structure is available on the university website www.uprag.edu/ (4.11). The organizational structure (4.21) of the university is widely available on the university Central Administration website where both, the administrative structure and key governing boards and administration, are presented.

Philosophy and Goals

The Institution’s administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement and support the Institution’s organization and governance. The philosophy and goals of UPRAg are set by means of a strategic planning. The documents “Diez para la Década” (2006-2016), translated as Ten for the Decade (2.3), and the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 of the UPRAg provide altogether the guidelines for institutional development. Strategic planning gives direction and cohesion to the administrative processes.
The vision and the mission are set by means of these processes (Standard 1 – Mission and Goals, Chapter 2).

The institutional administrative management guarantees the institutional integrity and learning environment. Financial aid is available for the personnel development and for research. An important goal in the teaching-learning process is the under-graduate research (Goal 5, Strategic Plan 2006-2011). On this goal emphasis is placed on faculty and students to do research activities. For example, the Natural Science Department has kept every summer, undergraduate research internships in the United States and Puerto Rico academic institutions (See Appendix 4.16 for Statistical Data regarding summer internships). Also the Natural Science Department emphasizes research through the appropriate courses. (4.17) Field research seminars and symposia are some of the means for this purpose. An important fact is that faculty and students participate in annual events sponsored by international organizations like the American Chemical Society (ACS), Beta Beta Beta Honor Society, and others.

The University of Puerto Rico and the National Science Foundation (NSF) have a consortium to keep under-graduate education at a high caliber in the subject of education, science technology, mathematics, and engineering. Many activities like lectures, meetings, counseling sessions, and advising sessions were held during the comprehended self-study period. Details about these projects are shown on Standard 13. Related Educational Activities (4.16 shows information on institutions and students attended internships on summer of 2005-2010).

Professional development among academic and non-academic personnel for leaves of absent, financial aids, and sabbaticals are provided. (Data regarding financial aids, sabbaticals, and leaves of absence are on Appendix 4.18. The university makes aid available to develop and strengthen its faculty. The Presidential Scholarship is also available for doctoral studies. Professors from the Natural Science Department, English Department and Electronic, Physics and Quality Control Department participate of the benefits of the Presidential Scholarships during years 2005-2010. In the year 2008-2009, two professors from Business Administration Department were recommended for this scholarship. Non academic personnel obtain financial
aid to continue their studies towards a degree. (See Appendix 4.19 for information regarding the member and distribution of persons who received these benefits).

**Emblematic Projects**

The UPR-Aguadilla conducts this comprehensive self-study with special emphasis on two emblematic projects: professional program accreditation and the information technology for instruction and learning. This model should enable us to appraise every aspect of our programs and services, governing and supporting structures, resources and educational outcomes in relation to institutional mission and goals, while maintaining particular focus in one or more areas of special interest. Although mention in other standards, the strategic plan Ten for the Decade, the support of the Board of Trustees and the President of the UPR via certifications and funds proved their compromise to those emblematic projects.

**Certification No. 138 (2003-2004) (4.20)** of the Board of Trustees, set the institutional Policy of Professional Accreditation of Academic Programs and Services rendered by the UPR.

- On May 2007, the Library received the visit of the evaluators’ team of the Association of Colleges and Research Libraries. Quality standards were recognized by this agency.

- The Business Administration Department submitted the corresponding documents for the accreditation by the Association of Collegiate Business School and Programs (ACBSP). Accreditation was obtained on March 2009.

- Other academic Departments: English and Education (Teachers’ Training Programs) submitted a letter of intention to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). After NCATE’s visit, Program of Teachers’ Preparation satisfied the requirements for accreditation.

- There are other academic departments and service departments engaged in the process of self-study: Electronics, Physics, and Quality Control Department is working towards accreditation by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET); the Office Systems Department is working towards accreditation by the Association of Collegiate Business School and Programs (ACBSP).
The Counseling and Advice Department is in the process of self-study required for the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS).

Other area of emphasis is information technology. This area was supported by the proposal New Pathways to Learning at UPR-Aguadilla: Moving Faculty and Students to the Forefront of Multimedia Educational Technology (2001). This was through the Federal Title V on years 2001-2006. The project had a good technological impact in the UPRAg. The UPRAg was able to place itself in a high position in the use of educational technology for educational (teaching-learning) purposes. The Center of Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM) was integrated as a unit of academic services. This has been a very successful program in the training of faculty, students, and administrative personnel, and a great step towards the implementation of Multimedia Education for the 21st Century (4.22), and emblematic project’s of UPRAg. CETEM has an institutional committee of educational technology: the “Comité Institucional de Tecnología Educativa” (CITE). This committee is responsible of evaluate the academic departments petitions of technological equipment to strength the teaching and learning process. Special technological fee that students pay during registration process is distributed by this committee. CETEM is in charge of buying, install and evaluate the technical equipment obtained through these funding. It also coordinates the whole process. For reports that present the use of that special technology fee Report 2007-2008 (4.23) and Report 008-2009 (4.24). During the year 2009-2010, ten new on-line courses began as part of the emblematic project under CETEM supervision. These courses are available through Moodle (For more details see Standard 11 – Educational Offerings, Chapter 7 of this Report).

Since technology and informatics are essential for the appropriate function of UPRAg, the Central Administration integrated “PATS Project”. Oracle Company substituted the administrative system known as Oracle eBusiness Suite. Oracle allows for the unifying of all the university system into one net and data base. The net band at the campus was expanded to enhanced wireless covering that permit that all students and personnel access the Internet at any point of the campus.
The Chancellor and the Deans evaluate the academic personnel in their Administrative functions by means of an evaluation instrument. Non-academic personnel are evaluated by means of form OCRH-001. Both evaluations became a part of the personnel file and are kept in the Human Resources Office. Professional development of non-academic personnel is taken care by the Human Resources Office.

Different auditing (external and internal) is held on the institution. Some examples are: Annual monitoring by the Comptroller of Puerto Rico (4.25). The OIT is audited several times by the Office of the Comptroller and the internal Auditions of the Board of Trustees. Ernst & Young is the company under a contract by the Central Administration of the University of Puerto Rico to make external auditing. Samples from each area of the UPRAg are taken and carefully audited, emphasized on Human Resources and Accounts payable. Recently the Board of Trustees Internal Auditing Office audit the areas of: Information Technology, Collections and Claims, Students’ Trips Programs, and Financial Aid Programs sponsored by Federal Grants (Title V).

Auditing by several government agencies are carried out. Some of them are the Health Department, (4.26) the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the US Department of Labor, (4.27) the Puerto Rico Occupational Safety and Health Administration (PR OSHA), (4.28) Solid Waste Authority of Puerto Rico and other government agencies.

External Environment on the University

The fiscal crisis affecting Puerto Rico since 2006 has also impact the University of Puerto Rico. Insufficient funds of the Government of Puerto Rico reduced the operating budget of the University. The 2009 incoming government adopted measure to deal with the budget shortage. Law Number 7 of March 9, 2009 (4.29), known as Special Law of Fiscal Emergency and Integral Plan to Stabilize and Save the Credit of Puerto Rico has had effects on the funding allocated to the University of Puerto Rico.

The University administration is measures to work out the crisis. Memorandum R-08-09-13 set the institutional policy regarding actions and transactions of the personnel for years 2008-
Memorandum R-08-09-14 set measures about institutional finances. Memorandum 08-09-16 (February 23, 2009) took care of areas like energy consumption reduction, strengthening of the University’s Energetic Policy, reduction of the use of official vehicles, credit cards cancellations, traveling cancellations, cell phone cancellations, accumulated vacation payments cancellation, photocopy and fax equipment, and reduction of extended working hours. Memorandum R-08-09-23 introduced other measures related to renting University’s facilities, revision of collection, documents, and cost of rendered medical services and collection of traffic infractions. All the President’s measures were in accordance to Goal 9, *Ten for the Decade*. Goals 6, 7, and 10 of the strategic Plan on the UPRAg are also accomplished.

All salary raises were canceled at July 2009 due to the fiscal crisis. These measures are in accordance to the Executive Order of the Governor that set savings measures and spending reduction. A task force was designated by the UPR President to be in charge of monitoring that the policies are effective.

**MSCHE Probationary Action**

The student stoppage that resulted in the probationary action by the MSCHE on June 2010 responded to the prospective measures considered by the University to face the projected decline in state appropriations resulting from the overall deficit that the central government faces. This scenario was aggravated by a concurrence of factors that prevented a timely and accurate disclosure to all University constituents of the institution’s fiscal situation with enough anticipation to grasp its magnitude, provide input, and garner their solidarity and support to the measures to be taken to secure continuity and effective implementation of the institutional mission and goals with the available resources, and contribute to that end within their roles and responsibilities.

Triggered by these events, on June 26, 2010 the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) placed on probation the 10 units for lack of evidence of compliance with Standard 4, Leadership and Governance, and Standard 11, Educational Offerings. The Commission requested the submission of a Consolidated Monitoring Report to document that has
achieved and can sustain ongoing compliance with said standards. In addition, the MSCHE requested evidence that UPR is developing and/or implementing a long term financial plan, including steps taken to improve the institution’s finances, and seeking alternative funding sources, in accordance with Standard 3, Institutional Resources. As part of the Monitoring Report, each campus present an Action Plan, to the MSCHE, that complement the ongoing compliance with the standards.

The University of Puerto Rico Action Plan for ongoing and sustainable compliance with the Leadership and Governance standard of excellence. The UPRAg Action Plan to achieve and sustain compliance with Standard 4 is organized in three areas: Foster an Enhanced Institutional Climate and Identity; Cultivate an Open University Culture, and Revisit and Empower Leadership and Governance at all Levels.

A. Foster an Enhanced Institutional Climate and Identity
Especially in these unprecedented difficult times, the University recognizes the necessity to efficiently and effectively convey and exchange official information with its constituents regarding the issues that affect them in an opportune, effective and efficient manner and demonstrate responsiveness to their concerns. This, in order to promote an environment conducive to a collective understanding and identification with the institution priorities and challenges, and for the appropriate managing with due anticipation of discrepancies that may threaten institutional integrity.

Key to the accomplishment of this goal is to encourage the active participation of most students in institutionally recognized organizations set for such purposes, to provide opportunities for them to engage without restraint to guarantee that decisions made truly represent both in number and diversity, the will of the greater part of the student body of the University.
Table 4.1  Standard 4- Action Plan for an Institutional Climate and Identity

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop and implement actions at all levels to support an institutional communication climate of collaboration, courtesy, respect and professionalism that assures the strengthening of the University identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE SYSTEM AND UNIT</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>CURRENT AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop strategies for a timely and accurate delivery of information to internal and external community in a cost-effective method.</td>
<td>Broaden communication delivery channels including but not limited to, updates of the Campus web page “Uprag.edu”</td>
<td>Information Technology Office</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Improvement in the delivery of information to the internal and external community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. CULTIVATE AN OPEN UNIVERSITY CULTURE**

**GOAL:** Support an Open University Culture that values diversity of ideas, guarantees and encourages freedom of speech and the right to dissent, while safeguarding the rights and responsibilities of all members of the University community with the continuity of the institutional education, research and service mission.

Table 4.2  Standard 4- Action plan for an open university culture

**OBJECTIVE:** Extend the participation opportunities of the different sectors of the institutional community for input in the decisions that affect them and within the dispositions and frame of actions established in the University of Puerto Rico Law, General Bylaws and applicable institutional policies.

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<tr>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE SYSTEM AND UNIT</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>CURRENT AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Encourage commitment with an Open University Culture (OUC) that guarantees the rights and responsibilities of all the constituents of our Campus.</td>
<td>Require from all administrators and officers in the Campus a written commitment with an Open University Culture</td>
<td>Chancellor</td>
<td>Sept. 2010</td>
<td>Governance explicitly committed with the OUC and with supporting sustained compliance with Certification 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Developed strategies for sustained compliance with related accreditation and licensing requirements and Certification 90 (2004-2005) of the Board of Trustees, which mandates unbroken access to University premises at all times.</td>
<td>A. Disseminate the Code of Conduct contained in the Student’s Regulations and its relevance to maintain eligibility for funding from the Higher Education Act and other external funds to advance the institutions’ mission.</td>
<td>Dean for Student Affairs</td>
<td>October 2010</td>
<td>Student’s code of conduct published electronically and posted in multiples visible locations across campuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Evaluates the responsibilities of the University Guard and the need to deal with crisis situations, vandalism and security against the property and the safety of all the constituents of the Aguadilla</td>
<td>Dean of Administrative Affairs</td>
<td>Sept.-Dec. 2010</td>
<td>Revised the security protocols, roles and profiles of the regular university guards and the ones provided by the private guard agency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**OBJECTIVE:** Extend the participation opportunities of the different sectors of the institutional community for input in the decisions that affect them and within the dispositions and frame of actions established in the University of Puerto Rico Law, General Bylaws and applicable institutional policies.

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop, define, revise, and align the dispositions, roles and responsibilities established in law and bylaws to ensure an effective and responsible participation within the prerogatives and defined spaces for action of each recognized organization and governance entity.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE SYSTEM AND UNIT</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>CURRENT AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Campus.</td>
<td>C. Harmonize the provisions of the Cert. 90 with the disciplinary rules and procedures (Chapter VI, part B, Article 6.2) of the Student’s General Regulations, the responsibilities of the Disciplinary Committees and related groups.</td>
<td>Dean of Student Affairs</td>
<td>Sept.-Dec. 2010</td>
<td>Revised the rules and sanctions to guarantee access to university premises at all times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote a better integration of the campus to their surrounding communities to facilitate continuous and secure access to the state university premises and services in alignment to the Open University Culture.</td>
<td>Develop and implement an Accessible University Plan</td>
<td>Dean of Administrative Affair</td>
<td>Sept.-Dec. 2010</td>
<td>Sustained a secure access to the Aguadilla Campus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C. REVISIT AND EMPOWER LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE AT ALL LEVELS**

**GOAL:** Revisit the roles and responsibilities of all constituents of the institution’s leadership and governance to foster an environment that stimulates and enforces compliance with the best practices in University rules and regulations, leadership, governance and institutional integrity accreditation standards, to ensure an empowered and committed leadership effectively supporting the accomplishment of the institution’s mission in a manner appropriate to their charge.

Table 4.3 Action plan for revisit and empower leadership and governance at all levels

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<th>ACTIONS</th>
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<th>RESPONSIBLE SYSTEM AND UNIT</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>CURRENT AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Enforce compliance with the best practices in University rules and</td>
<td>Reengineering institutional process in the participation of students in the decision</td>
<td>Chancellor, Dean of</td>
<td>May 2011</td>
<td>Integrate in the Student General Regulations the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

The findings of Standard 4 (Government and Leadership) and Standard 5 (Administration) might be used to conclude that:

1. The University of Puerto Rico promotes the integration and participation of the university community in the decision-making processes. This process occurs at the central level and at the different campuses levels.
2. The managerial policies allow for a structure with clearly defined functions.
3. The university management norms, policies, and rules by written and non-written means, so as to inform the university community.
4. The administrative public servants have the academic credentials and experience that entitle them to exert their work effectively and efficiently.
5. During the past five years, there have been administrative changes. The Strategic Plan has marked an effective way to develop the objectives towards the accomplishment of the Mission and Goals.
6. Annual evaluation of managerial positions is carried out.
7. The University management provides support to student’s services such as: online registration, online grade reports, direct deposit of the financial aid reimbursement.
8. The initiative instructional technology and accreditation have significant impact on the institution for the period of the self study report.
9. The accreditation initiative achieves the recognitions of the following: Library Program by Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL); Business Administration Department Programs from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP); Program of Teacher Preparation (English Department and Education Department) by National Council for Accreditation of Teachers Education (NCATE).
10. Other educational programs such as: Office System Department, Electronic Department and Professional Counseling Department are working toward accreditations of their corresponding accreditation agencies.
11. The Information technology initiatives have demonstrated significant contribution to networking infrastructure and computing capability in development effective faculty and students skills.

Recommendations

1. Expand the communication between university management and the different sectors of the community to improve the flow between, faculty, staff, and the government structures.
2. Conduct permanent training on 21st century managerial academic skills.
3. Strengthen an organizational culture so as to improve processes and services focused on Institutional effectiveness.
4. Establish a permanently Office dedicated to Institutional Assessment.
5. Broaden communication delivery channels including, but not limited to, updates of the Campus web page “UPRAg.edu”
6. Promote a more democratic participatory institutional culture, including, but not limited to the reengineering of institutional process in the participation of students in the decision making through assembly of delegates of students in proportion to the total students per each department.
7. Conduct periodic on-line surveys about situations and issues that concern the internal and external community.
8. Promote a better integration of the campus to their surrounding communities to facilitate continuous and secure access to the state university premises.
CHAPTER 5  

Student Admissions and Retention (Standard 8) and Student Support Services (Standard 9)

STANDARD 8: STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION  
The institution seeks to admit students whose interest, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the student educational goals.

INTRODUCTION
In the first part of this chapter will be examine the extent to which the institution’s admissions policies, procedures, and practices are clearly stated, fully understood, widely communicated, consistently implemented, and periodically reviewed. It also establishes how consistent they are with, and contribute to, the fulfillment of the institution’s mission, goals, and objectives. An analysis of the retention and graduation rates is made to examine the institutional effectiveness.

STUDENT ADMISSIONS

Freshmen Admissions
The admissions process for freshmen students to the UPR System is almost centralized. The Central Administration prepares systemic application and a brochure with information of all academic programs offered at each campuses. The Dean of Student Affairs certifies that the information to be disseminated reflects the actual academic offering.

Since 2003 students applying for any academic program at the University of Puerto Rico have the options of filling out the admission application form via internet (5.1) or by phone. This was instituted as a result of an assessment which identified conditions that would enhance and facilitate the application process. Students can select up to three campuses and program alternatives in order of priority, based on their preferences.

The Admission Office of each campus distributes the brochures and application forms to the high schools of their local area. Admissions criteria, deadlines for application, and any other concerns are explained at that time. In addition, the Central Administration also holds a yearly conference for High School Counselors which is held by region and at different UPR campuses.
This ensures that the counselor who is in charge of advising students are well-informed about all policies and procedures related to the admission process, thus, ensuring the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the information.

UPRAg provides all high school students with timely and accurate information about the academic programs and support services it offers. When students are accepted, the UPRAg sends them a package that includes detailed information about their admission, financial aid, medical service and general information.

Through Certification No. 25, 2003-04 (5.2) of the Board of Trustees of the University of Puerto Rico, establishes the freshmen admissions norms and policies.

- Graduation from an accredited high school with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher, or approval of the high school equivalency test offered by the Puerto Rico Department of Education.

- Scores on the College Evaluation and Admission Test (CEAT) offered by the College Board, which assesses students in five different areas: verbal and Mathematical reasoning, and achievement in English, Mathematics, and Spanish. Students, whose primary language is English, may instead take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT I and SAT II) in the same areas of the College Board.

- A General Average Index (in Spanish IGS) is computed using the GPA and the CEAT. This index applied 50% of the high school GPA, 25% of the CEAT Verbal Reasoning score, and 25% of the Mathematical Reasoning Score. Prior to 1995, the weight was equally distributed among GPA and the CEAT verbal and reasoning scores (one third to each component). Change came after a study commissioned by the Central Administration’s Admission Office determined that the GPA had a higher predictive value in determining academic success.

The freshmen admission policies and procedures were submitted to public scrutiny. On July 24, 2003, the UPR Board of Trustees published an announcement in a local newspaper informing the local community of its intention to approve new policies and norms and requested written comments on these matters. After considering comments and using its judgment and experience acquired from using the new General Average Index (in Spanish IGS) computation, the Board
emitted its Certification No.25, 2003-04 (5.2) “UPR’s Admissions Norms and Policies for Freshmen Students”

**Special abilities, talents or exceptional conditions as criteria to admissions**

Although admissions criteria at UPRAg conform to rules and regulations set by the Board of Trustees, the Institution is authorized to admit a limited number of students (not to exceed the 2.2% of its total freshmen admissions), by using other criteria which take into consideration their abilities, talents, or exceptional conditions. Students applying under these conditions:

- Must comply with the high school graduation and College Board examination requirements.
- Must indicate the abilities, talents, or exceptional conditions which make them worthy of consideration. Under these regulations, these students can have general average index scores up to twenty points under the scores required by the program of their choice. The UPR Central Administration’s Admissions Office certifies those candidates that comply with all requirements, and these are submitted to the corresponding units for analysis.
- Must demonstrate their skills in an evaluation performed by an expert in the area of their skills.

A Special Skill Committee studies each of the applicants to be admitted and certify that comply with all requirements to receive the necessary points for their admission. Students admitted are allowed to delay their UPR admission for a whole year on the condition that they present evidence that they will not be able to study in this period but will be able to study next semester. General Average Index (in Spanish IGS) for institutional program is determined through a specific process. The Dean of Academic Affairs and the Directors of the Department Programs participate in a meeting in which they analyze the performance of each program using the following criteria:

- The applicants, admitted, and enrolled students
- Evaluate General Average Index (IGS) and enrollment for first-year students
- Retention and Graduation Rates
Based on the analysis of this data, the department chair make recommendations to the Dean of Academic Affairs regarding the minimum IGS to be required for the program and the enrollment quota for freshmen. The information is analyze at the Dean level and submitted to UPRAg´s Chancellor, which officially approves the information and submits it to the Central Administration´s Admissions Office. This process ensures that students accepted to the academic programs of their choice have the required competencies. Table 5.1 shows the institution trend in admission quota, number of applicants, number of students admitted, and enrolled freshmen students for the past five years.

Table 5.1
Admissions quota, applicants, admitted, and enrolled freshmen students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMISSIONS</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admission quota</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>1051</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>889</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Admitted that enrolled</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Occupancy</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percent of students admitted that finally enrolled decreased in the years 2005 and 2006. We have an increase in the year 2007. In the year 2008, the percent is the same and we have a decrease for 2009. The percentage of occupancy declined for the first four years and increased in 2009.

Table 5.2 presents the number of freshmen students admitted at the UPRAg based on abilities, talents, or exceptional conditions for the academic years 2005-2006 to 2009-2010. It reflects that the UPRAg has complied with established admissions quota for students admitted by their abilities, talents, or exceptional conditions.
Table 5.2
Freshmen students admitted by special abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students admitted by abilities, or</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exceptional conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of freshmen enrollment</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 presents the distribution of incoming freshmen by General Academic Index (IGS) for the academic years 2005-2006 to 2009-2010.

Table 5.3
Distribution of freshmen by General Average Index (IGS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IGS Category</th>
<th>Percentage by Academic Year</th>
<th>2005-06</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>165 – 204</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205 – 254</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>255 – 304</td>
<td></td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305 – 354</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>355 – 400</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNKNOWN</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the content of table 5.3 it is clear that over 70% of students admitted had a General Average Index (IGS) higher than 250 since the academic year of 2005-2006

Transfer Students

A limited number of transfers from other UPR campuses (internal transfers) are processed by the Registrar’s Office; Transfers from private higher education institutions (external transfers) are processed by the Admission Office. The admission of external transfer students is guided by rules and regulations stated in Certification No.16, 2003-04 (5.3) of the UPRAg´s Academic Senate.
Table 5.4
Admitted and enrolled external transfer students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External transfers applications</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Admitted that enrolled</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the Self Study period, in academic year 2005-2006, UPR-Aguadilla enrolled the highest number of external transfer. The number decreased in the past years. The first semester (August) of each year had the higher number of external transfers.

**Procedures for Transfer Applicants:**

- The staff of the Admissions Office receives requests for transfers of stakeholders.
- The staff of the Admissions Office submits to the academic departments the requests for transfer with the transcripts of each applicant to be evaluated.
- The Director of the Department evaluates each case and recommends the admission or refusal of the applications and returns the case to the Admissions Office.
- The Admissions Office then sends the decisions to the applicants. In the cases where the applications are rejected, a letter is sent to the applicant, stating the rejection. In the cases of admittance, a letter of admission along with the documents from the Medical Services Office and the Financial Aid Office are sent out to the applicant.
- A copy of the file is sent to the correspondent Department and to the Registrar’s Office in order to begin the academic progress.
- The Admissions Director then assigns the student a number and opens a file in the program of Student Information System (SIS).
FIRST TO SECOND YEAR RETENTION RATES

Institutional Retention Initiatives and Efforts

An institutional committee was created to develop a Retention Plan. The Committee developed activities to improve the retention rates, such as:

- Professional counselors are offering special attention and follows up the students admitted by special skills and high risk. Strategies were established to identify their psychological, academic and vocational needs.

- The Guidance and Counseling Department implemented a new technique of intervention with students known as "Walk-in Counseling."

- Extended hours of the offices that provide direct service to students: Admissions, Financial Aid, Counseling and Guidance, Medical Services, Registrar, Bursar.

- The course Adjustments to University Life (INTD 3019) offers workshops to facilitate integration into college life.

Remodeling of the Careers Room, in which tests of occupational interests are offered. More students can take this test early in their university years to identify and assesses what really is their career interest. An identification of their real occupation interest may improve retention rates since the student may reclassify early in the correct program.

The UPRAg determines and evaluates retention rates at the institutional, degree and program level. This allows the institution to follow up students who come back for a second year, regardless of their program of studies in which they registered for, and those who remain in the original program for which they were admitted. The cohorts takes into consideration only first-time degree seeking students. The Figure 5.1 shows the freshmen first-year retention rate at UPRAg for the past five entering-academic years at institutional level.
As can be seen in the figure, the retention rates are based on first-year students returning and enrolling for their second year of study at our institution. The institutional retention rate maintains an average of 75% from 2005-06 to 2008-09. The drop of the institutional retention rate for cohort of 2009-10 was principally due a special event occurred in the academic year 2009-10. That information was mentioned at the Monitoring report to MSCHE (5.4) at September 2010. This will be the subject to an intensive study to identify the actual causes and take appropriate adjustments.

**Retention Rate Benchmarking Analysis**

The information provided in this part is based on the IPEDS – NCES (5.5) (College Navigator, sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics web site publication of statistics of the universities around the United States. When compared our retention rate with other institutions that have similar characteristics we find that our institution shows a reasonable ranking. Table 5.5 shows the average retention rate of the last five years with respect to others units that have similar characteristics with UPRAg.
Table 5.5
Retention Rate Benchmarking Analysis: UPRAg vs. other UPR System Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Five Years Average Retention Rate</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPR Humacao</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Cayey</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Bayamón</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Ponce</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Carolina</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Arecibo</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPR at Aguadilla</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Utuado</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this analysis we can show how our institution has the seventh position with respect the eight units mentioned. The situation changes significantly when we compare our institution with other private universities in Puerto Rico with similar characteristics. Table 5.6 shows this aspect.

Table 5.6
Retention Rate Benchmarking Analysis: UPRAg vs. Private Universities in P.R.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Past Five Years Average Retention Rate</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universidad del Sagrado Corazón</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontificia Universidad Católica - Ponce</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPR at Aguadilla</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InterAmerican University (IAU) – Metro</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU - San Germán</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universidad Politécnica</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU - Aguadilla</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Arecibo</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU - Barranquitas</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Fajardo</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Ponce</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU - Guayama</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU - Bayamón</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National College – Bayamón</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From fourteen private universities in Puerto Rico with similar characteristics of UPRAg, our institution is in the third position. Only the “Universidad del Sagrado Corazón” and the “Pontificia Universidad Católica” at Ponce have the first and second positions with retention rates at 77% and 76% respectively. This difference is significantly closer to our retention rate, and represents a wide opportunity to improve. It is important to enhance that these private universities are the elite’s private universities in Puerto Rico.

Based on a random sample of sixteen public universities around the USA, with similar characteristics, the UPRAg occupied the fourth position. This represents to be above 80% of these types of universities in the United States. UPRAg level of retention rate is reasonable when compared with others institutions. But we recognize that the flagships universities in the United States and Puerto Rico have retentions rates of 85% or more.

Table 5.7
Retention Rate Benchmarking Analysis: UPR-Aguadilla vs. USA Public Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Past Five-Years Average Retention Rate</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Mary Washington – Virginia</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNY at Purchase College - New York</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitchburg State College – Massachusetts</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPR at Aguadilla</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania State University- Abington</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowie State University – Maryland</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framingham State College - Massachusetts</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia State University</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah State University – Georgia</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Superior</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Oregon University</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of South Carolina-Aiken</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Cincinnati-Clermont College</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University-Newark Campus</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia State University</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazos port College – Texas</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.7, above, also shows how our institution has a fourth position with respect a random sample of sixteen public institutions around the United States with similar characteristics of UPRAg. Although the efforts and initiatives conducted during this period for the improvement of the retention rate, we recognize that we have wide opportunity to improve our retention levels to even higher levels. The implementation of new strategies to reinforce the retention efforts are part of the discussion and development in the Retention Committee. On the other hand, the Office of Planning and Institutional Research also maintains up-to-date the data base of student tracking in order to early detect special causes to influence the losing student.

GRADUATION RATES

National Center for Educational Statistics methodology is used to determine the graduation rates. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (5.5) is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. It fulfills a Congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report complete statistics on the condition of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally. The methodology used by the NCES to determine the graduation rate was the track of each entering class of freshmen students for a period of time, 150% of the time it is required to complete their degrees. For example, in the case of students entering associate degree programs for 2 years, 150% of time is 3 years. On the other hand, in the case of students who enter baccalaureate programs in 4 years, 150% of time is 6 years. Since over 70% of our enrollments are baccalaureate degree students, the cohorts are six years before the results are reported to the NCES’S IPEDS (National Center for Education Statistics’ Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year reporting to NCES</th>
<th>Cohort Informed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>2003 (2003-04 to 2008-09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>2002 (2002-03 to 2007-08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>2001 (2001-02 to 2006-07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>1999 (1999-00 to 2004-05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graduation Rates Benchmarking Analysis

This section show how our institution’s graduation rate compare with universities with similar characteristics, such as, other units of the UPR System, private universities in Puerto Rico, and public universities in the USA.

The three years average graduation rate of the UPRAg is compared in Table 5.8 with other similar units of UPR System. The three years refers at the three cohorts of freshmen entering class at 2001, 2002 and 2003 that was reported to the IPEDS-NCES.

Table 5.8
Graduation Rate Benchmarking Analysis: UPR at Aguadilla vs. other UPR System Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Past three Cohorts Graduation Rate Average</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPR Humacao</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPR at Aguadilla</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Cayey</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Ponce</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Carolina</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Bayamón</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Arecibo</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR Utuado</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared with other similar units in the UPR system, the results showed that the graduation rate of the UPRAg is higher than six of the units. Table 5.9 compares the graduation rates of UPRAg with similar private universities in Puerto Rico.
### Table 5.9
Graduation Rate Benchmarking Analysis: UPRAg vs. Private Universities in Puerto Rico

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Past three Cohorts Graduation Rate Average</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPR at Aguadilla</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universidad del Sagrado Corazón</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontificia Universidad Católica – Ponce</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InterAmerican University (IAU) - San Germán</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National College – Bayamón</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU - Barranquitas</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Ponce</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Fajardo</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Aguadilla</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Metro</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Guayama</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Arecibo</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universidad Politécnica</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAU – Bayamón</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that the graduation rate of the UPRAg is high in comparison to private universities in Puerto Rico. Table 5.10 shows how UPRAg compares their graduation rate level with a random sample of sixteen public universities in the United States with similar characteristics.

Based in the data presented in table 5.10, UPRAg have a retention rate level above the 68% of the United States public institutions with similar characteristics. From the previous tables we can conclude that our institution has a reasonable position comparing with different universities in terms of the graduation rate indicator. However, in general terms, a graduation rate below of 50% not should be our target. We will put all possible efforts to continue improving this important indicator.
Table 5.10
Graduation Rate Benchmarking Analysis: UPR at Aguadilla vs. United States Public Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Past three Cohorts Graduation Rate Average</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Mary Washington – Virginia</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNY at Purchase College - New York</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitchburg State College – Massachusetts</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framingham State College – Massachusetts</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania State University-Penn State Abington</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR at Aguadilla</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia State University</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowie State University – Maryland</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Superior</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of South Carolina-Aiken</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah State University – Georgia</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Oregon University</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University-Newark Campus</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia State University</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Cincinnati-Clermont College</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazosport College – Texas</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As part of the "Student Right-to-Know" (5.6) regulations, information regarding institutional retention and graduation rates is published at different institutional media, such as the institution’s catalog, flyers, PowerPoint presentations, and the institutional Fact Book.
Standard 9 Student Support Services

STANDARD 9: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students.

INTRODUCTION

As the second part of this chapter will be examines the quality of student support services available to help students achieve the institutional goals set for them. It also establishes how consistent they are with, and contribute to, the fulfillment of the institution’s mission, goals, and objectives.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

An institution’s student support services should be closely aligned with its mission and goals, appropriately geared to the strengths and needs of the student population, and available to all of its students. One of the major goals in UPRAg’s mission statement is to provide students with appropriate and timely services complementary to academic life. The Dean of Student Affairs coordinates the support services offered directly to students.

The support services enable each student to achieve the goals the institution has set for them by enhancing the student's quality of life and contributing to student development and learning. The Deanship of Student Affairs is engaged in the integral development of the UPRAg’s students with special emphasis on intellectual, psychological, physical, and personal aspects. Services that complement students’ academic life include Financial Aid, Counseling and Guidance, Admissions, Social and Cultural Activities, Quality of Life, Psychological Services, Placement, Medical Services, and the Athletic Program, among others.

The goals of the Student Affairs Deanship are:

- To provide students with appropriate and accurate services complementary to academic life.
- To provide the means for students to overcome their academic deficiencies.
To provide quality, personal, professional and physical development activities for students.

The main objectives addressed through student support services are:

- To provide students with basic health services.
- To identify the academic, occupational, and personal needs of students.
- To help students in the decision-making process in the selection of an occupation or profession.
- To encourage participation in student associations and extracurricular activities.
- To promote sports as an important aspect of the integral development of the student.

Office of the Dean of Student Affairs

This office coordinates and develops various recruitment activities to attract talented students who meet the admission requirements and are most likely to complete college. Some of these activities are:

- Establishing a schedule of school visits between the months of September and October to visit schools in the Northwest region. During the visit the students are informed about our academic offerings, the procedure for admission to the University of Puerto Rico and the availability of financial aid.

- The UPRAg carries out an annual Open House activity for which we invite about 25 schools in the northwestern region of Puerto Rico. Students, teachers and parents, are guided to all of the academic departments that offer programs leading to degrees. Academic departments will make presentations to the visitors of projects related to academic programs that offer and provide them information about these programs. During the Open House activity various student groups such as cheerleaders, athletes, dance and some student organizations give their presentations.

- When the institution received invitations from high schools to participate in their "College Days" that are held for their students, the Dean wrote to all of the Departments Directors that offer programs leading to degrees so that they can participate in the "College Day" and promote their academic offerings.
This Office assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of all student deanship services and provides support for changes that will enhance them. The Dean is actively involved in developing strategies that will enhance student participation in institutional decision-making. It includes increasing promotion efforts in departments and among professors who were asked to encourage their students to actively participate in the student government; having candidates share their information more efficiently, using electronic means as an alternative; and convoking students to academic department’s assemblies where they nominate the candidates suitable for student council positions. The plan was successful in achieving its goals, as voter participation met quorum requirements.

In order to assess student services in a more centralized way, the Dean requested that the Student Services Evaluation Committee prepare an instrument to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of student services supported by the Deanship. It will help to focus on the student services assessment plans.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES ANALYSIS**

**Admissions Office**

The Admissions Office provides to high school students with application forms and assists them in completing the forms in person or at online option [Admission Application Form via Internet](5.1). The Admission’s personnel receive and evaluate requests for admissions from private and public schools, as well as other universities. They also offer orientation on admission policies and procedures to high schools in the region.

Until the year 2005, the high school students could not apply to the university online, now they can. The new students that are admitted may receive their reply in their electronic mail. The admitted students can confirm his admission online at that time. Students who are denied admittance can apply for reconsideration to units of the system and to programs that qualify under the application of UPRRA (the application system to confirm the admission for reconsideration) online. At that instance, they are admitted and registered which greatly expedites the process of reconsideration and students from other towns do not have to come to the Admissions Office to request reconsideration.
Financial Aid

One important means of support offered by the Campus are the various programs of financial aid, scholarships, and fellowships. The Financial Aid Office offer orientation to high school and college students, process Pell Grant applications and student loans, supervise the work-study program, keep records of all student aid, and process records for students who transfer to other institutions. Coordinates and administers student financial aid programs and provides financial assistance and counseling. The Office awards aid to students according to financial need with data provided by the federal need-analysis processor (ED Express) after the processor has analyzed the information students and their families have supplied on the Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Figure 5.2 shows how participants in financial aid are increasing during the past five academic years.

Table below shows that there has been an increase in the total financial aid awarded during the past years and the number of students benefiting from them. According to this data, the average number of students that have received financial assistance in the past five years is 2393, which equates to an average of 77%.
### Table 5.11
Sources of Financial Aid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pell Grant</td>
<td>$7,268,392</td>
<td>$7,604,278</td>
<td>$8,311,899</td>
<td>$9,543,087</td>
<td>$11,681,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Grant</td>
<td>$647,449</td>
<td>$591,840</td>
<td>$655,987</td>
<td>$658,102</td>
<td>$611,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSEOG</td>
<td>$235,120</td>
<td>$170,537</td>
<td>$169,575</td>
<td>$164,057</td>
<td>$164,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAPP</td>
<td>$11,346</td>
<td>$10,600</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,725</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>$152,500</td>
<td>$244,000</td>
<td>$383,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACG</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$43,050</td>
<td>$120,025</td>
<td>$380,606</td>
<td>$449,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Study</td>
<td>$221,244</td>
<td>$252,476.25</td>
<td>$281,091</td>
<td>$266,420</td>
<td>$234,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Loans</td>
<td>$1,282,765</td>
<td>$1,319,878</td>
<td>$1,569,800</td>
<td>$1,679,800</td>
<td>$1,616,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Grants</td>
<td>$27,140</td>
<td>$16,126</td>
<td>$17,497</td>
<td>$98,411</td>
<td>$127,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Economic Aid</td>
<td>$9,693,456</td>
<td>$10,133,786.46</td>
<td>$11,278,374</td>
<td>$12,940,797</td>
<td>$15,143,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% from the Pell Grant</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students that receive grants</td>
<td>2,206</td>
<td>2,344</td>
<td>2,384</td>
<td>2,456</td>
<td>2,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total registered students</td>
<td>3,231</td>
<td>3,218</td>
<td>3,126</td>
<td>3,036</td>
<td>3,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% that receive grants</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average grant per student</td>
<td>$3,294</td>
<td>$3,244</td>
<td>$3,486</td>
<td>$3,885</td>
<td>$4,538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximately 75% of the aid granted is from the Pell Grant. In the year 2009-10, there was an increase in Pell Grant funds, because the percentage of students receiving these funds also increased.

**Food Services**

In the present a private concessionaire operates the cafeteria, located in the Student Center Building. It provides students, faculty, and no faculty personnel with breakfast and lunch on a schedule from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from Monday through Friday. Each two academic years, a Food Services Assessment Committee, composed by faculty and non faculty personnel, and student’s representatives conduct a survey to the university community to assess quality and satisfaction levels of food services.
Placement Office

The main objective of this Office is to assist students in identifying permanent or temporary employment. Services provided include arrangement of job interviews with prospective employers, coordination of employer presentations, and job referrals. The Office offers seminars and job fairs to facilitate job search, resume preparation, and develops interviewing skills. One employee of the Puerto Rico Government Labor Department was heading this office until May 2007. Due to government’s budget limitations, the Labor Department cut down their employee job hours to one day a week during the second semester of each academic year. Their employee assists our students in job search and helps us in the coordination of a job fair. In order to provide our students a better and continuous service, we assigned one of our university’s employees as an administrative assistant to head the Placement office since April 2009.

Athletic Program

A formal Athletic Program offers athletically talented students the opportunity to participate in a series of sports for which the institution provides professional coaching and training. Both female and male varsity teams participate in track and field, basketball, cross country, weight lifting, tennis, table tennis, baseball, softball, volleyball, and chess.

The Student Ombudsperson

Students who have a problem with a professor, a college official, or administrator, and fail to resolve their grievances through regular administrative channels may have recourse to the Student Ombudsperson. This individual is a college functionary designated by the Chancellor, and operating under his supervision, whose main responsibility is to represent the interest of the student when a seemingly valid claim is presented. The Ombudsperson is expected to help find a satisfactory solution to the parties involved in a problem without recurring to strict regulatory procedures or formalities. At present a professor from the Natural Sciences Department is acting as the Ombudsperson.
Students Organizations

Leadership and participation in extracurricular activities is encouraged through Student Organizations. Students are encouraged to organize groups or associations according to established standards. Any group wishing to establish itself as a student organization must apply for annual accreditation beginning in the first semester of each academic year. This process requires the submission of certain documents in the Office of the Dean of Students in order to verify the information related to membership, officers, directors and regulations. This must be consistent with the Student By-laws of the UPRAg. If the student organization violates the provisions of the Student Regulations, the accreditation will be revoked.

Table 5.12 shows the various classifications of student’s organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Classifies in two or more categories</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows how organizations are classified according to their purposes. Over 50% of them have been of an academic nature. The academic, sporting, religious and social, have remained in place year after year. Figure 5.3 shows the number of organizations that have been established each academic year with an average of approximately 25 organizations in the past five years.
Office of Social and Cultural Activities

The Office of Social and Cultural Activities contribute to the intellectual and cultural development of students, employees and community, through social and cultural events. Every semester, a calendar of different activities is published through various media. Table 5.12 shows the various kinds of social and cultural activities that have taken place during the past five academic years.

Table 5.13
Social and Cultural Activities taken carry out at UPR at Aguadilla

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Theater (Drama)</th>
<th>Concerts</th>
<th>Festivals</th>
<th>Theater (Films)</th>
<th>Excursions</th>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the table shows, there have been different social, cultural and sporting activities for the benefit of the people at the university and external community. You can also see how the number of activities per year has varied. The 2006-2007 was a productive year for social and cultural activities. The table also shows a significant decrease in activities in the most recent years.

**Registrar’s Office**

This office provides information in an accurate manner with consistent quality service that is responsive to the needs of the college community. The Registrar has the responsibility of maintaining academic records of all its undergraduate students, whether active or not, while ensuring the privacy and security of these records. It provides registration services to departments and students, records and reports grades, issues transcripts, schedules final exams and certifies attendance, grade point averages, and degrees.

Assessment of the effectiveness of several processes centered at the Registrar’s Office has resulted in significant improvements. All transcripts (student Copy and Official) are emitted daily for all students that request this service, and students asking for program readmission or reclassification receive their answer promptly (less than a month). As custodian of student records, the Registrar’s Office recognizes and guarantees students’ rights under the *Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974* (5.7) which holds that students have the right to:

- examine their academic records,
- ask that their records be amended to reflect factual information,
- consent for the release of information in their academic records, and
- to file a complaint if the UPR has not complied with these conditions.

Information about this Law is widely disseminated.

To ensure that students’ academic records are adequately safeguarded, certain norms and procedures have been established:

- Institutional Policies and Procedures for the Legal and Ethical Use of Information
- Ethical use of technologies at the University of Puerto Rico (*Board of Trustees’ Certification No. 072-99-2000*) (5.8).
- Procedures for granting access to the Student Information System at the UPRAg.
Norms and regulations for using accounts within the Student Information System.

Throughout the years, our services offered online have been extended for our students benefits. These services are: applications to readmissions and reclassifications, credit transcripts, special permissions, claims, probations, partial and total withdrawals. We also provide information about the following process: class attendance, grades, academic progress, veteran students, equivalences, and substitutions, Law 203: Rights of Puerto Rican Veterans, honor enrollment, enrollment, pre-enrollment, claims, forms and procedures, general office, changes in class schedules. Through our website we provide access to the students for: academic calendars, online grades, certifications, pre-enrollment turns, online pre-enrollment, and enrollment turns. (http://miuprag.uprag.edu) (5.9)

Quality of Life Program

The Quality of Life Program was created in 1997 as an initiative to promote a safe and healthy environment within the campus community. Crime, drugs, and alcohol are serious issues in society and have a direct impact on the quality of life within the system. The goal of this program is to create awareness and inform the campus community on drug and alcohol prevention, wellness, and campus security. The Program sponsors activities, training, workshops, and social events for students and employees. Orientation is given to students who request information on sexually transmitted diseases, drugs, HIV, and AIDS, among others. This program helps the College to comply with the federal regulations of the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act, and the Sexual Assault Program of the U.S. Department of Education. During the last five years (2005-2009), one hundred and sixty-one activities were held.

Medical Services Office

The UPRAg’s commitment to the personal health and wellness of its students is evidenced through services offered by the Medical Services Office. The personnel assigned to this office include a secretary, a nurse, and part-time general medical practitioners during regular daytime and evening hours. When necessary, patients are referred to specialists, laboratories, and hospitals. The Office complies with all of the regulations required by the HIPAA privacy law. Services offered by the Medical Services Office are: First aid, initial evaluation, diagnostics,
treatment, continuous monitoring on the condition of each patient, orientation on the medical
plan and services of the office in general.

Previously, the office offered family planning services from September 2003 to
December 2008. Since December 2008, the Family Planning Clinic was relocated outside of the
University premises to be able to offer the services to the community in general. Currently, the
students who received the services in our office are referred to the new facilities. These new
facilities are located at Barrio Borinquen, Marbella Mini Mall, Carr.107, Aguadilla, P.R. This
programs’ goal is to provide integrated sexual and reproductive health services accessible to both
men and women, including adolescents, so students may voluntarily determine the number of
children they are interested in having and the time to wait between pregnancies, respecting their
privacy, dignity and religious beliefs. Program objectives are: to prevent undesired pregnancies,
postponing pregnancies; achieve early identification of STD’s, early detection and referral of
infertility problems and strengthening family and couple relationships.

Project F.I.E.S.T.A XI

The UPRAg has the services of the project FIESTA XI. The project Facilitators and
Instructors in Traffic Safety and Alcohol (FIESTA XI) is sponsored by the Commission for
Traffic Safety. The proposal approved since October 2001. The office is under the Dean of
Student Affairs at the Department of Counseling and Guidance. The objectives of the project are:
prevent the university community about the dangers and consequences of driving under the
effects of alcohol and other drugs, present on the laws of transit security, and put into practice
positive security measures and infant car seats, create awareness that traffic crashes are the
leading causes of death in young people and university students. The table 5.13 shows the
number of activities offered by the Project FIESTA XI in past academic years.
Table 5.14
Activities given by Project FIESTA XI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Amount of Activities That Were Offered</th>
<th>People Impacted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>27,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>66,883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the activities carried out are: impact activities/discussions. Offer lectures to children, adolescents and adults aimed at road safety, promotions conducted in educational campaigns. Participate in fairs and in trainings. Distribute educational materials at mass events. We got the message across by the use of music, exhibitions, and bulletin boards.

Counseling and Guidance Department

The Counseling and Guidance Department have an important role in the students adapting to university life and therefore helps our students attain academic success. Identifying student needs and show them how to developed skills for a better adaptation of institutional experience and to drive integration of academics with social/personal service hours extended (vision and mission of the department). In support of the services offered by the department, there is the Laboratory of Carrier Services, which offers students an update of the various occupational fields that are available and administers questionnaires and occupational interest information and applications for graduate school exams. Among the activities sponsored by the Laboratory's of Careers, there is an annual Fair for Graduate Studies which directs the student to finish his/her bachelor’s degree and to evaluate other academic alternatives for their immediate future.
During the 2008-09 academic year, we began offering the course INTD 3019 "Integration Workshops to College Life" and other strategies available to help the new students. The course is voluntary and it is offered in their first year of study (1st or 2nd semester). The course began as a pilot project. The competency of critical thinking skills is evaluated within the course, general skills establish at the mission statement of the university. The elements assessed are: analysis, inferring logical reasoning and decision making through the completion of three (3) reflections on issues discussed in class. 87% of students who were tested showed the skill mastery.

Through the modality of "Walking Services" student groups are impacted with different interests and skills outside of the service bureaus. As a strategy, to give a more personal and direct monitoring to populations with special characteristics, a counselor is assigned to work with students on probation, high risk and special needs (students with disabilities). A work plan is established and a series of activities for the student to achieve personal stability and, therefore, reach their academic success. The professional counselor assigned to work with the population of students with disabilities spent 25% of their regular work time to receive and coordinate the request for reasonable accommodation by students, following the protocol for Reasonable Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (2008). Our students with special needs have the option to request and use all available direct student services and support, in particular, from the University's Dean of Student Affairs. The services that are offered to students with disabilities are framed within the existing state and federal laws, as well as the mission and vision of the UPR. Among the services offered to students with disabilities are: annotators for their classes, advanced pre-registration, use of elevators, special chairs, schedule changes, and changes in classrooms.

To help expedite the process and, as an intervention strategy, we created the Student Organization (People Helping, Raising and Offering Support) sponsored by the department with the integration of students with and without disabilities. The organization works in the adjustment and integration of students with disabilities in the university through various activities and events.
During the 2nd semester of the academic year 2008-2009, a research done was carried out on the Satisfaction of the Students with Disabilities in Relation to Accommodation (Assistant Educational Services) at the UPRAg. According to the results, the participants agreed that the university has a good attitude and a willingness to accommodate the requests of the students at the university. About 82% of the students were very satisfied with the provided accommodations.


The UPRAg believes in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas of life in society and that this population has the capacity and potential to be useful, productive and independent and can contribute to the Puerto Rican society. It also recognizes the equality and dignity of human beings before the law, whether or not they have disabilities.

Another organization within the Department of Counseling and Student Guidance Counselor is the Student Counselors organization. This organization is composed of student leaders of the university. Among the objectives of the organization is to promote the participation of students, especially the freshmen and the high-risk students, in educational and social activities sponsored by the Counseling and Guidance Department and the University. Student support counselors are counselors in the department (peer group) because they can relate to students who identify with some kind of conflict or situation. These students are trained to carry out these tasks.

During the academic year of 2007-2008, and subsequent academic years, a study was conducted to assess the individual services offered by the Department of Counseling and Guidance. A satisfaction survey was administered to students and community. Table 5.14 shows the level of student’s satisfaction through a three year span.
Table 5.15
Students Satisfaction with the Counseling and Guidance Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2007-2008</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The professional attended correctly to my worries.</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The professional provided me with alternative ways to get the information I needed.</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The professional showed receptiveness and interest during the interview.</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The professional maintained a respectful environment.</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table above shows a high level of student satisfaction with the service received at the Counseling and Guidance Department. Table 5.15 shows the qualities at the Counseling and Guidance Department that the users seek frequently.

Table 5.16
Users Demand of the Counselor and Guidance Department Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Professional</th>
<th>2007-2008</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Psychologist</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table shows a higher demand for the counselor services. An average of 15% is the demand for the Professional Psychologist. Table 5.16 shows the qualities the Counseling and Guidance Department to received services.
Table 5.17
Type of Users who receive services by the Counseling and Guidance Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Users</th>
<th>Demand for Services 2007-2008</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Psychological Services**

The psychological services at UPRAg includes individual or group therapy, support groups, psycho educational oriented groups and workshops related to different areas of interest. Those services started on January 2005, includes seventeen hours per week. Given the amount of cases of students requesting for psychological services, the hours was gradually increased to 27. Starting on August 2010, and responding to the demand for psychological services and the IACS accreditation requirements, a full-time psychologist was hired. Table 5.17 shows a summary of interventions made and the number of students impacted.

Table 5.18
Summary of Psychological Interventions from 2005-06 to 2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Summer Session</th>
<th>Number of Students attended to Interventions</th>
<th>Total Number of Interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January to May 2005</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August to December 2005</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January to May 2006</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August to December 2006</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January to May 2007</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August to December 2007</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2008 to June 2009</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2009 to June 2010</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Not available

The number of students who were attended to represents the amount of students that completed the initial bio-psychosocial evaluation or intake.
**Student Center/Recreation Center**

For the purpose of harmonizing its student’s physical, athletic, and sports development with an ethical and professional formation, the UPRAg has a Recreation and Sports Intramural Program available. Information on the program is posted in flyers on bulletin boards across the Campus. The Social and Cultural Activities Coordinator, complying with stipulated responsibilities, plans and supervises recreational activities. Based on students’ preferences, it offers multiple types of recreation. The facilities have five pool tables, a music box, a domino table, a TV set, a money slot machine, and table games. In recent years, this structure has had a series of improvements. During the academic year of 2006-07, floors were replaced and some areas of the Center were painted.

**Bookstore**

The college bookstore is located at the Student Center. The concessionaire is selected through an auction process which agrees to sell textbooks as requested by various academic departments for the two academic semesters during the academic year. They also sell other school items. Each two academic years, a Bookstore Assessment Committee, composed by faculty and non faculty personnel, and student’s representatives, conduct a survey to the university community to assess the Bookstore Services.

**Campus Safety and Security**

The University of Puerto Rico has among its priorities, to provide to the university community and its visitors, a healthy and safe environment. There have been established several institutional policies, some federal and some state laws that guarantee students, employees and visitors security and well-being. In 2006-07 a Campus Security Committee was formed to develop a Security Protocol based on the Jeanne Clery Act (5.10) and Campus Security Standards. The effort of this Committee is evidenced and other information about security is available at the UPRag website.(5.11)
The institutional policy at the UPRAg promotes a safety environment for study, work and student life free of risks, violent and danger. The University of Puerto Rico has established programs that foster healthy and safe life styles inside their facilities.

At the UPRAg the student rights (5.12) are recognized. The students and the general community are informed about any criminal action which occurs inside the University and the surrounded areas. The University of Puerto Rico will collect data and will keep the university community informed by newsletters and other media about criminal incidents that take place on the Campus.

Since criminality is a threat to our peace of mind and well-being, it should be a common effort of the entire university community, as well as the external community, to combat it. Any person that violates any state or federal law will be subject to disciplinary actions according to the university regulations.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Admissions standards and criteria for institutional programs are clearly stated, consistently applied, and widely disseminated to potential students.
2. The effectiveness of the process for determining approval of incoming student’s transfer credits could be improved upon.
3. When compared with institutions of similar characteristics UPRAg rank The graduation benchmarking analysis Our level of retention rate is reasonable when compared with others institutions.
4. The percentage of students admitted and enroll is adequate.
5. Our institution has a reasonable position comparing with different universities in terms of the Graduation Rate indicator. However the institution must continue improving this important indicator.
6. The Department of Counseling and Guidance supports programs targeting different populations: students with special needs, athletes, and students at risk and on probation.
7. The institution enforces norms and regulations that ensure students’ right to confidentiality and they are aware of it.

8. Goals and needs of freshmen are assessed frequently; their main concerns are focused on academics.

9. Offices have improved processes and services as a result of their assessment activities. The quality of these services has been consistently evaluated by students as fair or better.

10. Transfer of technology has been applied to administrative processes and services. Today processes as admission-application form, booking pre-registration, registration, payment, delivering grades, and processing of financial aid, among others, are available online.

11. Offices that provide direct services to students have extended hours. These include Counseling, Registrar, Payment Office, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Medical Services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that transfer students have their transferable coursework approved before enrolling at the institution for first time.

2. Development of strategies to improve student support services, to improve the student satisfaction.

3. Work on increasing retention and graduation rates at the institutional level by developing support services that enhance the student experience and help them in achieving their goals and aspirations, especially those related to academic success.
**STANDARD 10: FACULTY** The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

**Introduction**

Faculty members are qualified professionals by virtue of their education, training, experience and skills. UPRAg recognizes that the faculty members are central to the institution’s teaching and learning process. Since the origin as a Regional College to the present, the faculty continues interacting closely with their students both inside the classroom and outside of it. They engage in services that enhances both the university and their disciplines. This chapter will scrutinize faculty recruitment, retention, performance assessment, and promotion. It will also addresses the effectiveness with which the faculty performed its responsibilities of teaching as well as other related roles, like student advising, curriculum development, academic policy making and governance. A brief mention of the recent impact of cost control measures is also mentioned.

**Faculty Profile**

During the past five years the number of the faculty members was an average of 170 members. The faculty account for 46% of all UPRAg employees. About 82% of the faculty members are full-time employees of the institution, 64% of whom are tenured. Full-time faculty distribution by rank is as follows: 26% are Full Professors, 24% Associate Professors, 35% Assistant Professors, and 15% Instructors. Twenty three percent (23%) of the full-time faculty members have a doctoral degree.

Faculty participates in institutional governance through formal membership in deliberating bodies such as the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board. As member of

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1For more details, figures and tables of faculty profile please go to Appendix Std 6.22
the Academic Senate they also have the opportunity to be selected to represent the campus in the University Board or the Board of Trustees.

Table 6.1 – Faculty Profile
First Semester of Academic years 2005-2006 to 2009-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Faculty</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By academic preparation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By rank:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Professor</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By type of contract:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untenured</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By classification:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fact Book OPEI

Table 6.1 presents a five years profile of the UPRAg faculty. Data shows that, in the five years period assessed, there has been significant change. Faculty with doctorates degrees has increased from 25 to 41, equivalent to a growth rate of 64%. There have been no significant changes in the other faculty profile areas.

However, the recruitment of the part-time faculty has changed over the past five years. The full-time to part-time ratio has almost double in five years, (9.6% to 17.9%), from approximately 9 to 1 in 2005-06 to 4 to 1 in 2009-10. Given the present economic conditions in the UPR’s budget, the projections will be to hire more part-time faculty. When compared to those in other campus of the University of Puerto Rico, UPRAg has a similar full-time ratio as the University of Puerto Rico at Ponce (82% full-time on fall 2008) but lower full-time ratio as the University of Puerto Rico at Humacao (91% full-time on fall 2008). Through these organizational structures the institution adopts policies, norms, and procedures. The faculty also participates in many committees and ad hoc committees where institutional assessment and
recommendations for improvements at both the departmental and institutional levels arise. Faculty members are highly identified with the College. Given that the College is mainly a teaching institution, the faculty research is still a minor undertaking at UPR-Aguadilla.

**Professional development toward a culture of continuous assessment**

The UPRAg is engaged in a process that aims to develop a culture of continuous improvement (see Annual Report of the Academic Affairs Deanship 6.27) through continuous assessment. The institution’s general assessment plan aims to ensure:

- an emphasis on the process of teaching and learning in order to make it relevant, pertinent and valuable
- mechanism of self-reflection in which evaluates the same process of appraisal in order to achieve a dynamic of meaningful participation, and
- enhance faculty teaching skills and assessment techniques with training workshops and professional development activities in the area of assessment; and specifically focus in areas such as the effective use of the information technologies and communication, improving services, effective reporting, and procedural rules and ethical issues

The plan for growth and development of the faculty is supported with institutional funding, for faculty who enroll and attend training and educational activities continuously throughout the year. As a result of this plan, the faculty of the UPRAg keeps update with new trends and advances in knowledge. Most of the faculty members attend conferences, forums and courses where new trends are proposed and discussed, and theories and models of education focused on the needs of the student in this century. The effort to create and institutionalize a culture of continuous assessment and improvement have led the Academic Senate and Administrative Board to approved various institutional certifications that are aimed to support the professional development of the faculty and the improvement of their academic services:

- Administrative Board [Certification 2003-04-70](#). (6.1) Amends Certification 2002-03-129 to require that the new faculty must be enrolled in doctoral degree studies on a full-time basis, and that the University must be agreed upon between the professor and the Dean of Academic Affairs.

- Academic Senate [Certification 2003-04-26](#). (6.2) Establish that new faculty members to be hired must have a doctoral degree in their area of specialty or must commit themselves to start doctoral degree studies in a period no longer than two years.
o Administrative Board Certification 2005-2006-37 (6.3). Sets the criteria for granting tenure status to the faculty members.

o Administrative Board Certification 2005-2006-44 (6.4) Amends the procedures of requesting and processing financial aid assistance and licenses to the faculty and regulates the graduate studies academic progress report.

o Administrative Board Certification 2006-2007-44. (6.5) Amends Certification 2003-2004-70 which established the norm that if the faculty member does not meet its study plan commitment can not remain in the UPR System.

For the UPR System, the Board of Trustees approved other norms that also support the professional development of the faculty:

o Certification No. 173, 1987-1988. (6.6) The objective of this certification is to promote the research endeavors in the University of Puerto Rico. Established that the faculty members who conduct research projects during their summer vacation period could receive additional compensation for as much as one third of their annual salary.

o Certification 86, 2003-2004. (6.7) This certification sets the extraordinary license criteria and compensation to be given to the personnel of the University of Puerto Rico to pursue graduate studies in accordance to the University of Puerto Rico’s General Regulations.

o Certification 72, 2006-2007. (6.8) This certification sets the Institutional Policy to award presidential scholarships to pursue doctoral and post-doctoral studies.

The aforementioned certifications reflect the institutional interest and commitment to academic excellence. Faculty development opportunities are equitable distributed and align with institutional priorities. The Strategic Plan 2006-2011, Goal 2, Objective 2.3 aims to "increase the opportunities for the faculty members to complete higher studies and research projects or improvement of education through study leave and Sabbatical." Likewise, the Goal 2, Objective 2.4 states "to improve teaching skills of faculty with special attention to develop effective teaching strategies that allow them to identified and help high-risk students, integrate assessment techniques in the teaching/learning process and effectively use instructional technology.

\^For a list of the Professional Development funds approved for the years 2005 to 2010 see Appendix 6-1
Table 6.2  Faculty receiving study leaves and/or economic assistance
To pursue higher degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Leave with Pay</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Leave without Pay</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ext. Leave without Pay but with Econ. Assistance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave for Agency Service</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbatical Leave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Economic Assistance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Economic Assistance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Assistance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL NUMBER OF LEAVES AND/OR AID CONFERED</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2 presents the total active faculty members receiving study leaves to pursue a doctoral degree. For an equitable distribution of funds for faculty development is necessary to prioritized how the limits funds available will be distributed. To that end the Institutional Faculty Committee use as a guide the criteria for setting priorities for recommendation of licenses for study of the faculty. Among those criteria:

- Requirements from the MSCHE or the PR-CHE
- Professional accreditation
- Academic progress (amount of credits already approved and average grade)
- Study stage (new or continuation of study)
- Institutional interest (Are the study or research align with the priorities of the institution and the academic program where he (she) teach?)
- Previous scholarships or economic aids received and amount of years receiving it
- Amount of years (full or part-time) in the doctoral studies

The Institutional Faculty Personnel Committee assigned a different weight according to the institutional priority.
Faculty Workload

The regular courses load for faculty is 12 credits per semester; they teach approximately 625 sections of courses per semester. Over the last five years the average of student-faculty ratio (in FTE) is 27:1. This workload may be considered reasonable given the fact that each campus must act in accordance with Certification number 135 (2009-2010) (3.15) (Details on Section 5, Requirement number 6, page 5) of the Board of Trustees that required a maximum number per section of 30 students. Table 6.3 shows the student-faculty ratio for the first semester 2009-2010.

Table 6.3  Student-Faculty Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>Faculty Head Count</th>
<th>Student Head Count</th>
<th>Faculty FTE</th>
<th>Student-Faculty Ratio (Using Faculty FTE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>859</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Systems</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education-Physical Education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics-Quality Control-Physics</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COLLEGE TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,997</strong></td>
<td><strong>112.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Students and faculty personnel not classified in above Departments are not included.

The American School Search (6.9) provides detailed information on 6,627 colleges across the United States and has been designed to help potential students make a more informed choice about where they would like to attend college. A high “total students-to-full time faculty ratio”, like the 119:1 in Table 6.4, typically imply larger class size, less attention to students, questionable quality of education and satisfaction for both the students and the instructors. Low ratios are usually a sign of the opposite.

A brief summary, in Table 6.4 shows the workload of four of the private institutions of higher education and our campus. When compared the total students to full-time faculty with its peer institutions in the Northwest Region of Puerto Rico, the UPRAg present an excellent ratio.
Appendix 6.24 present relevant data about how does faculty compare to its peers institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Total students to full-time faculty ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla</td>
<td>27:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontifical Catholic University at Mayaguez</td>
<td>54:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American University at Aguadilla</td>
<td>56:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turabo University at Isabela</td>
<td>107:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan University at Aguadilla</td>
<td>119:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Technology and the faculty: the Instructional Technology Initiative**

New technologies of information and communication in society are constantly increasing. It is, therefore, necessary that the education system take the measures necessary to conform to these changes so that they can perform correctly and harmonically to the times in which we live. The institution understands the importance of integration of technology in the teaching-learning process.

The emblematic project “Multimedia Education for the 21st Century” of the UPR-Aguadilla is the institutional response to that need to develop the technological infrastructure, and teaching skills to integrate multimedia educational technology to the teaching-learning process. The systemic strategic plan “Ten for the Decade” and the campus own strategic plan recognized the imperative of that integration. This emblematic project is aligned with the goal 4, objective 4.1 and 4.2 of the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 (3.1).

The institution began a pilot project, coordinated by the Multimedia Educational Technology Center (CETEM, Spanish acronym), to offer online courses according to Goal 4 (“Continue to integrate new information technologies (IT) in the teaching-learning process”). Objective number 4.3 indicates: “Over a period of five years (July 2007 to July 2012), at least 20% of the faculty will offer one or more online course.” Culminated the third year, of that pilot project, ten online courses were already created at the end of the academic year 2009-2010. For the fall Semester 2010-2011 a total of 14 online courses were offered.
An Institutional Assessment Committee (6.10), with faculty members of each academic department, developed guides and models (6.11) to facilitate the design and preparation of the online courses. The Office of Information Technology (OTI) provides administrative and academic support in their laboratories and is responsible for creating and managing the internet accounts.

A series of events contributed to a great degree that the faculty and other academic professionals have the knowledge to utilize and integrate instructional technology in their courses and/or in their administrative work. Some of them are:

- Systemic compromise to define a framework that enables members of the university community to make the best use of technology resources in a secure environment that promotes the university's objectives of transmitting and increasing knowledge through instruction, research, and service outreach.

- Board of Trustees Certification No. 25, 2007-08 (6.12) created a University system-Wide Policy for the acceptable use of Information Technology Resources through the University of Puerto Rico. This Policy applies to all users of the Information Technology (IT) of the University of Puerto Rico (“the University”), including but not limited to students, faculty, researchers, and staff. These resources are a valuable community asset to be used and managed responsibly to ensure their integrity, security, and availability for appropriate educational, research, service, and other institutional activities. Users are required to use IT resources effectively, efficiently, and responsibly; in a manner that does not impact the quality, timeliness, or delivery of a person's work to the University nor hamper the rest of the community's ability to conduct their work for the University.

- Board of Trustees Certification No.123, 2005-06 (2.3) Ten for the Decade, a University Strategic Plan, presents the academic/administrative of emphasis for the future. Technological upgrading was one of ten emphasis criteria; it look for the Increase and upgrade of the technological equipment in laboratories, library
and the classroom, provide to all the UPR constituents effective accessibility to the network and the necessary technological equipment to do so.

- External and institutional funds have been used to update almost all of our computer labs for student use and for teaching.

- One of the main goals established in the Institution’s Strategic Plan 2006-2011 is the development of information technologies. UPRAg has grown greatly in this area in the past five years with inversion in infrastructure and the development of competencies and techniques for the incorporation of technology in the classroom. Some examples present how those competencies and techniques are incorporating:

  - The institution has a wireless network that provides Internet connection to the university community including access to web sites maintained by UPRAg units and departments. Wireless access points can be found throughout the Campus allowing faculty, non-faculty and students to access the Internet as well as to work on their assignments, projects, or research outside of the laboratories.
  - The Faculty makes use of the Informatics Learning Center (CAI).
  - The Office of Information Technology (OTI) provides administrative and academic support in their laboratories and by creating and administering internet accounts.
  - CETEM provides a variety of workshops during the semester with topics related to integration of technology in the teaching-learning process. Faculty received a certificate for attended the workshops. Those that cannot have the opportunity to attend workshops have access to manuals and video tutorials. Several of these manuals (6.13) can be found on the CETEM portal.
  - Besides the resources in their departments, the faculty members also have access to the resources of CETEM, including the loan of computers and other equipment for activities related with the courses and/or official representation in community activities.
o As part of its services, CETEM has laboratories, in the second floor of the library, for offering workshops and to facilitate the faculty in the development of instructional materials. This Center includes computers with the latest operating systems, software and peripheral equipment. The laboratory is supervised by the personnel of CETEM who also maintains a record of the laboratory users.

Faculty desktops computers are changed on a two-three year cycle while laptops are changed on a three-four year cycle. The faculty uses technology to carry out the teaching-learning process and incorporate web pages as instructional resources and as a means of strategies of teaching. They have access to the CETEM web-hosting service for keeping their academic web pages. The institution provides an account to access email to communicate with colleagues from collaborating departments, the external community, administration and the students. The UPRAg strongly encourages faculty to access data base of information through means of the digital data base in the library. During the period of these report the following activities have been carry out:

o Use of the Moodle Learning System, (6.14) a method of enhancing teaching and learning that allowed faculty members to use a variety of web based tools for instruction.

o The faculty supplement students learning styles with the use of the following applications:
  o power point presentations,
  o edublogs (6.15)
  o electronics instructional modules
  o audio and video conferencing,
  o web-based instruction,
  o distance communication formats for assignments,
  o and research work.

o Availability of technologically equipped classrooms that support and facilitate the integration of technology during the class, and provide students opportunities to experience the use of varied instructional methods available to help students learn.

o Classrooms technologically equipment that support the learning process.
Faculty Recruitment, Tenure and Promotions

The institution’s policies and practices, present in this section, actually enabled it to recruit, develop and retain faculty who support its mission, goals and objectives. During the five-year probationary period, newly hired faculty members receive support to develop their skills in the classroom, to learn the University’s procedures for serving as an academic advisor, and to fulfill other University’s activities.

Faculty Recruitment

The Administrative Board (Certification 2006-2007-121) (6.16) allowed that the allocation of faculty positions reflect our academic and programmatic priorities. It required that the Chair of the Department and the Dean of Academic Affairs made a five-years projection of doctoral degrees needed for the academic program. This analysis served as evidence that the recommendation for new recruitment or for doctoral studies is align with the priorities of the institution and the professional accreditation required by the academic programs covered by these accreditation.

The UPR’s General By-Laws set the framework for the establishment of rules and regulations regarding faculty recruitment.

- Until June 2006, the minimum education requirement for a tenure-track position as a faculty member was a master degree.
- The immediate impact that the professional accreditation standards have on the faculty recruiting and appointment began in June 2006 when the Board of Trustees of the UPR System approved Certification 2005-2006-145 (6.17). This certification upholds the institutional policy that requires doctorate as a condition for granting tenure-track employment and tenure to faculty, except in disciplines with a proven difficulty in recruitment, according to the policies and procedures established by the UPR. One requirement for most of the professional accreditation is the number of doctorates in the institution.

More details about faculty recruitment on Appendix Std. 6.23
In the last ten years the deliberative bodies of the UPRAg (Academic Senate and Administrative Board) have established institutional policies and practices aimed at giving priority to the recruitment, development and retention of faculty with doctoral degrees.

The Strategic Plan (2006-2011), Goal 5 Objective 5.5, project an increase in the proportion of doctorates in the UPRAg from 14% in the academic year 2004-2005 to at least 30% for the academic year 2010-11. At present this goal is almost accomplished given that for the academic year 2009-10 the total faculty with doctorate is 23%.

The UPRAg effectively present to the new faculty an orientation that covered the regulations they need to know about the UPR System. As part of the orientation provided for new faculty the three Deanships (Academic, Student and Administrative Affairs) provided to each of them the University By-Laws and a written Handbook with general information about the university culture, the norms and procedures. The Administrative and Student Deanships also provided to the new faculty member additional information that describe their offices and services offer. An audiovisual presentation in MS PowerPoint, summarizing the most important topics and the personal contact orientation given by each Dean, allowed the new faculty members to clarify any doubts. Copy of the Guide prepared by the Deanship of Academic Affairs is available in the appendix 6-28 of this chapter.

**Faculty tenure and promotions**

Faculty performance evaluations are conducted in accordance with the UPR’s General By-Laws (3.34) for tenure-track faculty members, and every fifth year for tenured faculty members.

- Article 45 states that the following criteria should be considered when promoting and granting tenure to faculty:
  - quality of teaching, research or disclosure,
  - dedication to university work and service,
  - compliance with teaching duties
  - professional improvement
  - involvement in faculty work, including committees
  - research and creative work
other related activities

Article 46 stipulates the rules and regulations for granting tenure to faculty. The Administrative Board is empowered by law to grant tenure, requiring that faculty occupy a tenure-track position and provide five years of satisfactory services. Promotion procedures are stated in Article 47.

Table 6.5 Criterias for Promotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Quality of teaching</th>
<th>Yearly evaluations of peers, students, and department head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II. Creation and publication activities</td>
<td>Original faculty work, such as: books; anthologies; educational modules; research projects; research proposals; academic manuals; courses created; bibliographical works; conferences offered; expositions, concerts, poster sessions, direction or participation in art plays; professional designs; active participation in seminars, symposia, forums, workshops, and panels; competitions; camps and clinics; translations; University-related consultation; radio, TV, and video productions; and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Professional improvement Activities</td>
<td>New degrees received; courses taken, with or without credit; professional titles; seminars, symposia, forums, workshops, panels, congresses, conventions, and conferences; membership in professional associations; cultural trips; and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Participation in committees, dedication to University service, and to the federal, state, and municipal governments</td>
<td>Participation in governing bodies and committees at the University Central Administration level, UPRAg, level and departmental levels; administrative responsibilities; and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Community service</td>
<td>Provision of service to non-profit institutions which benefit the community directly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty is required to prepare a portfolio with documented evidence supporting each criteria, according to the Instruction Manual for the Promotion Checklist developed by the Academic Senate. The evidence is qualitatively and quantitatively assessed.

The UPR’s General By-Laws in its Article 65, establishes the duties that the faculty members must carry out. These duties are summarized as follows:
The Academic Senate of the UPRAg approved Certification No. 2002-03-45, (6.18) Norms, Criteria and Complimentary Procedures for the Evaluation of the faculty members of the UPRAg. At the departmental level, the Departmental Personnel Committee and the Departmental Chair conduct evaluations to improve the faculty member’s teaching effectiveness and to assist their development of a scholarly agenda consistent with the culture at the University System. All Faculty members independent of their ranks, time of service or duties, are submitted to the same evaluation process. All professors will be evaluated with three types evaluations:

- evaluation of their peers in the classroom (Personnel Committee),
- evaluation of by the Departmental Chair, and
- evaluation by students.

The faculty evaluation process is carried out as follow:

- tenure-track - Every semester for a period of five years the students of at least two sections evaluate the faculty that are candidate for tenure. The faculty member has the right to select the course and section to be evaluated. Members of the personal Committee and the Department Chair evaluate the tenure track candidate once a year also for a period of five years.
- tenured faculty – Every five year the students of at least two sections evaluate the performance of the tenured faculty.
- part-time faculty – The Departmental Chair, the Personnel Committee and the students evaluate all the part-time faculty members each semester.
Faculty participation in program revision, improvement and assessment

All curriculum and course creation and revisions are approved by the departmental faculty members before being submitted to the Academic Senate for its approval. The Vice Presidency of Academic Affairs of the UPR System coordinates the curriculum and educational process review. Figure 6-1 shows the sequence that follows the process of considering a proposal to create a new academic program. These processes allow that our faculty effectively been involved in all the phases related with the academic programs.

The methods or mechanisms of participation and involvement in program development and related activities have changed in the past five years. Since 2005, the mission and goals of UPRAg were impact by an Institutional (Systemic) Plan developed by the Central Administration of the UPR System known as *Ten for the Decade (Diez para la Década)* (2.3)

Is a document that identifies desirable parameters of institutional life for the University of Puerto Rico in the years to come and defines the university’s commitment to achieving its goals. Provide new concepts to conceptualize a more tempered university to modern times. The professional accreditation standards was one of the areas that Ten for the Decade look forward for all academic programs with the potential to be accredited in that form.

In term of the process, the active involvement of the faculty in the academic program revision, improvement and assessment began by the departmental Curriculum Review Committee. The Committee presents the revision or improvement to the departmental faculty members. The next step is to present the proposal to different levels of the academic/administrative chain, each of them with representation of the faculty members: the Academic Senate, the Administrative Board, the University Board and finally the Board of Trustees.
The procedures for the development and evaluation of academic programs and its curricular sequences has been established by:

- Board of Trustees Certification No.80, 2005-2006 (6.19) Procedure for the creation of new academic programs. The objective of Certification number 80 is to guarantee the highest quality of academic programs and to compile the academic processes (from the formulation of a proposal for a new academic program by an academic department until its approval) within the University's legal structure. The proposal for a new academic program must include the following items: title of the degree to be granted, justification for the program, professional accreditation to be pursued, relation to the mission and strategic plan of the institutional unit and the UPR system, curriculum, learning goals, admission requirements, faculty, administrative and staff personnel, physical and technological infrastructure, student services, budget, evaluation and assessment plans, and the progress reports that must be submitted, among other items.
o Board of Trustees Certification No.43, 2006-2007 (3.28) procedure for the evaluation of academic programs. The objective of Certification number 43 is to establish a uniform procedure for the systematic and consistent evaluation of the academic programs. This certification fosters quality of the teaching-learning process, research and service through the periodic revision of the strengths and areas for improvement. The Dean of Academic Affairs of the institutional unit will establish the action plan to deal with the areas for improvement. This Certification promotes short-term and long-term planning taking into consideration present and future opportunities and threats.

o Board of Trustees Certification No.27, 2003-2004 (6.20) Establishes the policy and procedure for the creation of curricular sequences in the UPR. The academic policies and procedures in place in the University include uniform course syllabus format, a curriculum review process and a master course program.

**Faculty and the process of accreditation**

The accrediting process requires responsibilities among the faculty, the students, the administration, and the Board of Trustees. The evaluation of the academic program is mostly a responsibility of the faculty members. They work toward the evaluation of the curriculum, the teaching and learning process and infrastructures all in relation to the institution’s objectives and its financial resources. The roles of faculty in the accreditation process are:

- participation in the self-study design and report in each one of the subcommittee created for this purpose;
- preparation of the academic aspects of the self-evaluation. The completed self-evaluation should be made available to the entire faculty prior to its submission to the accrediting commission and should be subject to amendment in the light of faculty suggestions;
- meet with the visiting committee to discuss questions of faculty concern;
- report of the visiting committee to the entire faculty, and
- be fully informed of the accrediting commission’s actions after the evaluation
Impact of budget control measures

A steady decline in government appropriations currently reflects a reduction of approximately 14% in tax revenues. That reduction aggravates state government’s deficit and also the UPR budget that faces an ensuing reduction for the current and upcoming fiscal years, with fiscal year 2010-2011 General Fund Revenues 10% below the prior year. The University of Puerto Rico as a system is confronting the expected reductions in state funding through a variety of cost control measures established by the Board of Trustees and the President in areas that do not materially affect the quality and continuity of academic offerings. Some of those control that will impact the faculty are temporary measures and others appear to be of permanent effect:

- A recess in salary increases, promotions, and summer session allocations.
- A recess in benefits not required by law, namely: faculty allowances, financial aid for faculty studies, sick-leave reimbursements, special bonuses, and perquisites.
- Reduction of payment commitments to the Medic Plan.
- Revision of tuition exemption policies within the framework of Certification No. 131 (2009-2010) (6.21) of the Board of Trustees.
- Reductions in general expenses driven by a 5% adjustment in service contracts, additional compensations, materials and others.
- Establishment of a minimum capacity of 30 students in traditional undergraduate courses.
- Reduction in travel funds.

However given the economic constraints of the UPR Budget, the Board of Trustees approved a series of certifications that affected the present and future salary, fringe benefits and other reductions to all employees of the UPR’s System.(See Table 6.6)
### Table 6.6 Board of Trustees’s budget precautionary measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Number</th>
<th>Junta de Síndicos</th>
<th>Paper Ref.</th>
<th>Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Universidad de Puerto Rico</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td><strong>Link</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>Salaries and fringe benefits to employees : (moratorium).</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>Budget 2010-2011. Provides the maximum number per student sections.</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>The process of evaluation for the new rank to the tenure track faculty will continue, but the monthly payment of the new salary scale will not be process until funds will be available.</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>Reduction of 5% in Chancellors and Deans salary</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>Elimination of special perquisite summer fund to faculty ($475).</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>Elimination of the special bonus to non-faculty employees’ member of HEEND ($420).</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Elimination of the perquisite for the Union ($45 / m).</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Reduction of 5% bonuses for faculty members in administrative position</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>5% reduction in the payment of compensation for additional courses given by faculty.</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>Elimination of the perquisites for the Chancellors and the President</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146</td>
<td>Establishment of Special Stabilization Fund ($800 quota per student).</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>Elimination of payment for excess sick leave</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The institutional leadership is actively reexamining and reprioritizing its finances in order to allocate funds efficiently through the implementation of appropriate measures that promote economies while maintaining institutional effectiveness.
Despite all the economic control measurement, the average salary at UPR reflects a competitive salary when compared to those in private university of Puerto Rico (Table 6.6).

Table 6.7 Average salary of full time faculty equated to 9 months contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Assistant Professor</th>
<th>Associate Professor</th>
<th>Full Professor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Puerto Rico - Aguadilla</td>
<td>$41,462</td>
<td>$44,839</td>
<td>$59,376</td>
<td>$69,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter American Univ. of P.R. –Aguadilla (private)</td>
<td>$28,968</td>
<td>$31,484</td>
<td>$35,539</td>
<td>$39,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universidad Metropolitana (private)</td>
<td>$26,843</td>
<td>$34,119</td>
<td>$38,115</td>
<td>$43,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontifical University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez (private)</td>
<td>$25,286</td>
<td>$29,918</td>
<td>$33,661</td>
<td>$38,374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2009 IPEDS

**Faculty representation: Governance and Leadership**

In the UPR, each campus has representation from their respective faculty members at the University Board. At the Campus level the faculty representation is at the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board. In addition to that representation, the committee structure is an important means by which faculty are ensured a role in institutional governance. Each Deanship has different committees where the faculty can participates by designation of their peers or by designation of each Dean or Departmental Chair.

At every level, from department to the University as a system, faculty participates in developing and reviewing curriculum, implementing learning assessment processes, defining standards for faculty advancement, and helping in the recommendations that may set policy in different matters. Furthermore, faculty can be seen as a major stakeholder in strategic planning. Within the extensive committee structure, the Academic Senate is the principal liaison between the administration and the faculty members. This liaison is extended via the Senate to advisory boards like the Administrative Board and the University Board.

Two faculty members of the Academic Senate are elected by the Senators to represent the faculty in the Administrative Board and one faculty members of the Academic Senate is elected to represent the faculty in the University Board. One of the Senate’s most important functions is to maintain communication with the faculty. In order to know the perception of the faculty members about the flow of communication, from those who represent them in the Board of
Trustees, University Board, Administrative Board and the Academic Senate, the Subcommittee of the Standard 6 (Faculty) prepared a questionnaire that asked that matter. This opinion poll covered 48 faculty members, as focal group, from almost every Academic Department, that told their perceptions of how effective was the communication of the faculty representatives to their constituents.  

Question number 1 (column 1): How regularly you received, from representatives of the faculty, at the Board of Trustees, reports or issues that are being evaluated or considered at those level? The figure below shows that 56% of the focal faculty group said that they never received information from the professor that represent them at the Board of Trustees.

Table 6.8 Opinion Poll about faculty representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Board of Trustees</th>
<th>University Board</th>
<th>Administrative Board</th>
<th>Academic Senate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semiannually</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.2 How often faculty’s representative at Board of Trustees inform their constituents?

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4See example of the questionnaire in Appendix 6.25.
The table 6.7 shows that 63% of the faculty focal group of the UPRAg never received information from professors that represent them at the University Board. It also present that 48% never received information from professors that represent them at the Administrative Board, but only 6% of the faculty focal group said that never received information from professors that represent them at the Academic Senate. There is a significant different between the contact with their constituents by the Departmental Senator and the others levels of representation. Some of them perceived, however, that communication is sent only when the Senator think that the topic has some interest for their constituents.

Figure 6.3 Did you know the name of the faculty member that represents you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Board of Trustees</th>
<th>University Board</th>
<th>Administrative Board</th>
<th>Academic Senate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is critical for a system of representation that so many colleagues didn’t know those who are supposed to represent them.
Almost half of the faculty members that answered the questionnaire said their total years of work service in Aguadilla is greater than ten years. These colleagues are telling us that although they have representation at different levels of the governance of the UPR System, there is little or any connection or communication between them. For more information about the results please go to the Appendix 6.25.

The following conclusions and recommendations provide an initial consideration of the areas and endeavors that should occupy the institutional efforts for professional development toward a culture of continuous assessment.

Conclusions

With limited resources, UPRAg has almost accomplished its goals during the past-five academic years (2005-10); yet there is much to be done in order to sustain its progress. During that period, UPRAg has effectively accomplished many important objectives on its way to achieving the emblematic goals that were set in its Strategic Plan 2006-2011. Those achievements have been described in this and the other chapters of this report.
Despite all the economic control measurement, the average salary at UPR reflects a competitive salary when compared to those in private university of Puerto Rico. In the five years period assessed faculty with doctorates degrees has increased with a growth rate of 64%.

**Recommendations**

1. **Information Technology (IT) Initiative**

   Over the past eight years, the institution has been literally immersed in a concerted effort of designing, managing, and administrating this Information technology infrastructure. In this process, UPRAg has demonstrated the ability to apply technology systems to support and facilitate the administration of its academic programs and has effectively established standards and procedures. The institution has also made great advances in using and integrating these technological resources to enrich and improve the teaching and learning process. It can be concluded that UPRAg must continue to invest in Information Technology in order to improve upon the excellent foundation that has been provided, despite the difficult economic times. The following specific recommendation should be considered in planning future endeavors in the area of IT.
   - Provide the resources to the faculty in order to expand the online learning offerings.
   - Faculty must consider ways to better identify student needs for online courses so that required courses can be planned more effectively for online offering.
   - Activities should be instituted by the faculty for discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, including identification of best practices in online learning.

2. **More effective and regular communication from the elected members of the faculty**

   The Board of Trustees, the University Board, the Administrative Board and the Academic Senate, includes faculty members elected by their peers to represents their interest in those Boards. If the focal group is a projection of the total universe that represent the faculty, then, there is a perception among faculty members that elected members did not communicate to their constituents regularly those topics that may be present to their
consideration. Most of them did not even know who are the faculty members that represent their interest in those Boards. The following specific recommendation should be considered for a more effective and up to date communication:

○ Elected faculty members (to the Senate, Administrative Board, University Board and Board of Trustees) must inform (every month or as necessary) the topics in consideration by the Boards and facilitate a process for the feedback from their constituents. The purpose is to share information in a systematic way with the goal of having a more informed and engaged community. It should include both formal strategies, such as official announcements from the faculty representatives of those issues related to the University operations as well as informal, such as discussions between faculty in wide meetings every four to six weeks for the purpose of information sharing, solicitation of feedback and questions, and to maintain regular and predictable opportunities for dialogue.

○ The following list is not all-inclusive, and there may be other effective techniques that can be used and/or added by the members that represent the faculty in each Board.
  ○ Emails from the Academic Faculty Senators to the faculty and Emails from the Student Senators to the UPRAg students.
  ○ Develop a section in the UPRAg Web with news that presents topics and projects in process in each Board with a calendar that includes a reminder of important dates to the UPRAg community.
CHAPTER 7  Educational Offerings (Standard 11)

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.

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview and analysis of the educational offerings at the UPRAg. It focuses on assessment data and information of academic programs and related educational activities, as well as administrative procedures and resources. The purpose is to render a clear and unbiased account of UPRAg’s educational offerings within the context of the institutional goals, the assessment of expected learning outcomes of each academic program, and the efforts aimed at improving teaching and learning.

The first section of this chapter provides a description of the educational offerings with a focus on relevant program and student information. The second section of the chapter reports on the efforts that have been made to enhance teaching and learning goals and objectives; specifically on:

- describing efforts to institutionalize a culture of assessment to promote excellence in administrative and educational performance,
- emphasizing the integration of instructional technology and the accreditation initiatives

The third section will describe the actual teaching and learning assessments; focusing on:

- program quality improvement,
- faculty involvement in assessment,
- student learning and support services, and
- resource allocations.

As mentioned in previous chapters of this Self-Study Report, UPRAg is part of the University of Puerto Rico’s (UPR) public higher education system. The system is
comprised of three major campuses and eight 4-year university colleges distributed throughout the Island. The UPR System provides educational services to some 65,000 students. UPRAg is one of the university colleges serving the northwest region of Puerto Rico. UPRAg comprises ten academic departments, of which eight offer academic degree programs and two are academic service departments. Each department is headed by a department chairperson or director, who serves as administrator. The Library/Learning Resources Center and the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DECEP, acronyms in Spanish) are two additional departments that provide academic support and services. The average enrollment at Aguadilla is approximately 3,100 students; and most students enrolled are seeking a degree. Students may fulfill this objective by completing one of the bachelor or associate degree programs offered, or by completing transfer requirements to a desired degree program at another academic institution.

**UPRAG’s Mission**

UPRAG’s mission, goals and objectives are presented in another chapter of this report; however for the purpose of this chapter, it is important to note that the mission, goals and objectives are aligned to the UPR education system’s 10-year strategic plan\(^1\). The Strategic Plan establishes a general roadmap for the development of the UPR System during the ten year period between 2005 and 2015. It is also important to highlight that the UPR Board of Trustees has approved institutional guidelines for the creation and evaluation of academic programs and their curricula sequences. These guidelines ensure that the educational offerings reflect the vision and mission, as well as a guarantee that all programs are properly administered and assessed. The following official certifications by the UPR’s Board of Trustees have been approved to assure the uniformity of the institutions educational offerings with respect to its mission and the continuous assessment and improvement of all programs.

1. **Certification 80-2005-06 (6.20):** Board of Trustees: This certification establishes the procedures for the creation of new academic programs and sets the general standards to ensure the quality of UPR programs offerings.

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\(^1\) (See “Diez para la década”: [http://sindicos.upr.edu/docs/123-diez-decada.pdf](http://sindicos.upr.edu/docs/123-diez-decada.pdf) 2.3)
2. **Certification 43-2006-07 (6.21)** Board of Trustees: This certification establishes a uniformed procedure for the systematic and consistent assessment and evaluation of all academic programs within the UPR system. The certification emphasizes quality and by promoting research and short and long term planning of assessment and evaluation.

3. **Certification 27-2003-04 (6.22)**: Board of Trustees: This certification establishes the UPR’s policy for the development of curricular sequences.

Furthermore, while individual and specific academic program goals and expected learning outcomes may vary, they stem from UPRAg’s institutional-level educational outcomes which in turn result from the institution’s mission and vision. **UPRAg’s Mission Statement** reads as follows:

*To provide educational alternatives, within the arts, sciences and technologies that respond to the economic, social, and cultural needs of Puerto Rico, particularly those of the northwestern part of the island. Academic options include programs at the baccalaureate and associate degree levels, professional certificates, and credit and non-credit courses for professional and technical development or personal growth.*

Congruent with its mission statement, UPRAg has set specific criteria aimed at achieving academic excellence, and has designed its learning goals in response to today’s dynamic, and technologically inclined global economy. Moreover, in order to achieve its goals, the institution strives to create an appropriate environment that is conducive to teaching and learning; this includes: a) furnishing appropriate materials, equipment, and physical resources, b) appointing the necessary human resources, c) providing the essential student support services, d) maintaining a social climate of cordiality, respect, and democratic participation, and e) institutionalizing a comprehensive assessment system focused on continuous improvement.

Within this general context, the institution’s educational offerings aim to provide a holistic and balanced education that focuses on the formation of individuals that are both technologically and professionally proficient as well as socially adept. This balance of practical skills and social awareness is reinforced by the alignment of the program curricula and course-specific objectives to the general goals of the institution. Program and course
content include knowledge and skills of both a general and a professional nature. The institution’s clear and precise goals and objectives guide the procedural processes of program and curricula/course creation, assessment, evaluation, and revision that ensure continuous improvement of UPRAg’s educational offerings.

**Table 7.1 Strategic Plan 2006-2011 UPR-Aguadilla: Goals and Objectives 1 and 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL 1. Respond to the social, cultural, and economic needs of Puerto Rico, particularly the northwestern region, through innovative, and relevant educational programs, considering both degree-granting and non-degree-granting alternatives.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Continuous improvement of programs will be assured through systematic assessment, so that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All academic programs will be submitted to formative assessment activities each year, placing emphasis on student learning outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- A five-year formal comprehensive assessment/revision schedule will continue to be enforced.</td>
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<td>- General Education will be appropriately integrated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Obtain external professional accreditation for the following bachelor’s degree programs:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Education (all variants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Business Administration (all variants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Prepare an action plan to develop new or revised educational offerings based on needs assessments to be conducted at least every two years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 At least two Distance Education options will be offered, most probably to satisfy professional continuing education requirements (e.g., Teacher Certification courses, Quality Systems, Realtors License).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Increase educational opportunities for non-traditional students through online offerings, web-based administrative processes, and adequate services in non-regular working hours.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goal 2. Maintain an effective human resources development program.

2.1 Complete a revision of the faculty evaluation system by June 2007.
2.2 Increase faculty exchange opportunities between the college faculty and US and foreign faculties.

2.3 Increase improvement opportunities for the faculty via Sabbaticals and Leaves of Absence for Studies.

2.4 Increase faculty pedagogical competencies through effective and ongoing training in areas such as:
   - earning-teaching strategies
   - learning-assessment strategies
   - how to effectively deal with high-risk students
   - basic skills development
   - effective use of educational technology

2.5 Improve work-related skills of the non-teaching personnel, through proper training.

As shown in Table 7.1, UPRAg’s Strategic Plan (3.1) for the period of 2006-2011 establishes the following goal and objectives directed at ensuring correspondence to UPR’s mission and the pursuit of academic excellence; nevertheless, more specific information on assessment and program accreditation efforts are presented in the other sections of this report.

Most students registered in UPRAg are seeking a degree; this objective may be fulfilled by completing one of the associate or bachelor’s degree programs or by completing transfer program requirements to continue degree studies within the UPR system or at another institution. UPRAg’s degree, transfer, and other educational alternatives are described below:
Table 7.2 Degree and Transfer Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. S. Biology - Through appropriate course selections, students may specialize in the sub-fields of Biomedics, Bioinformatic, Quality Control, Genetics, or Biology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. B. A. Business Administration - Through appropriate course selections, students may major in Human Resources, Accounting, Finance, Computer Information Systems, or Marketing. (See Figure 3 for more details)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. A. Education in English with Multimedia Technology - Program designed for students choosing to major in Teaching English at the Elementary Level or Teaching English at the Secondary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. S. Electronics Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. S. Environmental Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. A. Office Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. A. Elementary Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTICULATED TRANSFER PROGRAMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPR-Campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPR-Arecibo</td>
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<td>UPR-Carolina</td>
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<td>UPR-Cayey</td>
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<td>UPR-Mayaguez</td>
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<td>UPR-Ponce</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPR-Rio Piedras</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2 The Morse Academic Plan (MAP) of the College of Arts and Science is an integrated general education curriculum of the NYU (New York University) in the liberal arts. The MAP is named for Samuel F. B. Morse, an early faculty member of the University. Best known as inventor of the electric telegraph, Morse taught fine arts at NYU and was an eminent painter. In order to be awarded the B.A. of B.S. degree, all CAS students must complete in NYU the requirements of the Morse Academic Plan commonly referred to as "MAP", the undergraduate liberal arts core curriculum. Though structured and integrated, the MAP curriculum affords students flexibility in a number of ways. It permits the choice of different tracks in each component. Given this flexibility, students work individually with advisers to plan course schedules that take into account their past preparation, current interests, and longer-term goals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Minors</th>
<th>2. Management Accounting</th>
<th>7. Marketing</th>
<th>alumni and focal groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. General Accounting</td>
<td>8. Information System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Finance Accounting</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BBA-150 credits

There is a 5\textsuperscript{th} year option to those students in the Accounting Major that look for the CPA Exam. In order to comply with the requirement of the CPA Exam the student must add 30 credits to the regular BBA program.

**Certification 150-1999-2000 (7.2)** of the Board of Trustees approved a new concept in the UPR System, to offer a flexible bachelor in Business Administration. It is a non-traditional approach of the BBA with 5 majors and 21 minor options. This program is similar to the Morse Academic Plan (MAP) developed by the New York University \(^3\) but in our case focus not only in the general education but in minor concentrations, either business or non-business minors. Similar to MAP, rather than specifying a fixed canon of knowledge, students are free to pursue particular interests by choosing among a number of courses toward one or two minor concentrations. This program seeks to prepare students for an entrepreneurial activity after finished their studies and to equip them well for lives as thinking individuals and members of society.

The BBA curriculum affords students flexibility in a number of ways.

- Permits the choice of different tracks in the general education and the business administration courses.
- Alignment between courses required for a non-business minor and courses in the area of general education.
- Could finished this program in one of this combinations:
  - one major in one of the five BBA concentration with two BBA business minors;
  - one major in one of the five BBA concentration with one BBA business minor and one non-business minor;
  - one major in one of the five BBA concentration with two non-business minor;
  - one major in one of the five BBA concentration with one minor and other electives no conducted toward a minor;

\(^3\) [http://cas.nyu.edu/object/bulletin1012.ug.morseacademicplan (7.3)]
o one major concentration in one of the five BBA concentration with no minors but electives no conducted toward a minor but may be requirements for a master degrees
o two BBA majors;
o a general BBA (with no major concentration) with two minors, either in two BBA minors, two non-business minor or one BBA minor with one non-business minor; and,
o a general BBA with no minor.

Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean

There is a proposed academic program for a Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean that is similar to the BBA since the student can select a major with one or two minors in different areas. Experts in economics, business and industry talk of a global reorganization that has been occurring in the socio-economic, political and cultural life in the last twenty (20) years. This fact forces to position Puerto Rico in its immediate geographic context: the Caribbean. This B.A. in Multidisciplinary Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean will promote understanding of the socio-historical-cultural Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Our country, for its technological advancement, geographical location and as part of the U.S. business environment can take advantage and be a catalyst body within our Caribbean region.

The multidisciplinary nature of the program, can produce an individual who can visualized and integrated different areas within their concentration.

The following table presents a summary of the principal majors and minors:

**Table 7.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean</th>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>Minors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Studies of PR and the Caribbean</td>
<td>o Fine Arts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o History of PR and the Caribbean</td>
<td>o History</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o Cultural Tourism</td>
<td>o Music</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o Secondary Education in History of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean</td>
<td>o Theater</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Cultural Tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Business Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Articulated Transfer Programs:

An articulated transfer involves an agreement between two or more UPR units; however, private universities may also enter into these agreements with the UPR. The UPR Board of Trustees Certification 115, 1996-97 (7.4) regulated the offering of articulated transfer programs. Articulated transfer programs allow students to initiate a given bachelor’s degree in a UPR institution and to continue their degree studies in the degree program’s home-campus. The transfer is assured if the students have satisfactorily completed all requirements set forth in the agreement of articulation. The articulation requirements usually include: a) admission requirements equal to those of the home campus, b) approval of a set of specific courses, and c) an accumulated minimum GPA.

In addition to the articulated transfer programs, already mentioned, UPRAg is working towards establishing new articulated transfer agreements; the following Bachelor Degree transfer programs are under negotiation:

- Social Sciences: Iberian-American Studies - with UPR-Arecibo,
- Social Sciences: Forensic Psychology - with UPR-Ponce,
- Social Sciences: Psychology and Mental Health - with UPR-Ponce,
- Social Sciences - with UPR-Mayagüez,
- Criminal Justice - with UPR-Carolina,
- Social Sciences - with UPR-Cayey, and
- Humanities - with UPR-Mayagüez.

Moreover, it is expected that enrollment in general transfer programs will diminish as articulated transfers increase; therefore, total transfer program enrollment will essentially remain stable.
Non-Degree Options: Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DECEP)

Individuals interested in training or professional improvement can register in any of the credit-courses offered at UPRAg in compliance with admission requirements. The Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies provides diverse academic offerings for professional, technical, and personal improvement. Its offerings include credit courses for professional improvement; short non-credit courses; and lectures, conferences, seminars and workshops. The DECEP can also respond to specific needs through custom-made courses or programs, and other flexible educational experiences. It is involved in providing educational offerings to the wider community of the northwest region of Puerto Rico by developing and implementing grant proposals regulated by federal and state agencies. At the present time the DECEP is involved in numerous state and federally sponsored proposals that provide a wide array of educational programs and alternatives (7.5). See more details in Chapter 9, Standard 13.

Degree Options: Evening University (DECEP)

The Board of Trustees Certification number 190-2000-2001 (7.6) (Institutional Policy and Strategic Direction for Continuing Education and Professional Studies of the UPR) reorganized the Division to make its program respond, thoughtfully and recurrently, to the needs of several populations of non-traditional students in the community at large. This new concept led the DECEP to offer, according to Section 4.3, academic programs to the non-traditional students. See more details in Chapter 9, Standard 13.

Enrollment 2005-2010

New student enrollment statistics by academic year (7.7), page 18 of Fact Book, indicate a gradual increase of total enrollment, up to and including academic year 2009-2010. Similarly, enrollment numbers by individual program (7.8), page 33 of Fact Book, also indicates little variation in new student enrollment from 2005 to 2010. However, although the statistics indicate a rise in new student’s enrollment for every year by a small amount, the statistics also reveal a slight drop in total enrollment. Hence, the drop in total
enrollment is clearly not from lack demand of UPRAg’s educational offerings. The answer lies elsewhere; even discounting for graduations and transfer-outs, it seems that a fall in retention may be the cause. Both, an assessment to determine the major factors leading to retention reductions and a plan to improve are required.

**Students Characteristics**

A typical UPRAg student is most likely to be female (64%), unmarried, between 17 and 24 years old, enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program, in need of economic assistance, a first generation university student from the northwestern region of Puerto Rico, and an everyday commuter to the college see Fact Book 2008-09, information on age, civil status, gender, origin, etc.

**Non-traditional Students**

As stated previously, UPRAg also provides educational and professional developments services to a considerable number of non-traditional students seeking credit and non-credit courses through different options offered by the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DCEPS). The breakdown of enrollment corresponding to students enrolled in courses by special permission and students admitted to professional development courses during the years 2005 through 2010 indicate the importance and commitment of UPRAg in providing educational opportunities to the general.

**Degrees Awarded**

The data on the number of degrees awarded by UPRAg between 2005 and 2009 indicate a gradual decrease of both the AA and BA programs; moreover, enrollment numbers have remained constant. This finding of reduction in degrees awarded (See Fact Book, page 47. (7.9) is significant and must be singled out for further study.

**Program Quality**

The overall quality of a program results from a combination of multiple factors. Although certain areas have been identified in this report as requiring improvement, taken as a whole, the following general factors render quite positive results.
Adequacy of Program Descriptions and Related Information

All departments revised their information of the catalogue assuring adequate up-to-date information of each program. Many departments produce their own information brochures. These brochures include well-organized information and data related to program objectives, admission requirements, instructional methodologies, resources available to the students, and courses offered, among other things. In order to ensure the integration of information technology related skills, all curricular syllabi were assessed. Course syllabi revision included the reformulation of course objectives and the inclusion of new teaching and learning resources and activities. To comply with accreditation requirements, further curricular syllabi evaluation and revision were carried out by the departments of English, Business Administration, Electronics, Education, and Office Systems. The assessment and subsequent revisions process assured that all programs have clearly stated objectives and that these respond to specific program goals and educational needs. Furthermore, that course syllabi and curriculum activities show effective congruence with program and institutional goals.

Admission Requirements

In all cases examined, the admission requirements were clearly stated and informed, both for freshmen candidates as well as transfer candidates. No evidence of arbitrariness or unfair consideration was detected. Courses approved in other accredited university-level institutions may be accepted for credit transfer, if appropriate equivalence with required courses is established. Equivalency tables have been setup for this purpose.

Program Objectives and Curriculum

The average semester student workload (7.10) in bachelor’s degree programs is 16 credits, whereas for the associate degree programs it is 17. Courses are frequently reviewed by the faculty. These revisions are reflected in the constant up-dates of the corresponding syllabi. The following Table 7.5 shows that, in general, the curriculum design assures adequate balance between general education courses and courses of specialization.
Academic Support System

All academic departments at the UPRAg are chaired by a faculty member with 50% release time of their regular course workload. In the large departments –Business Administration; Electronics, Physics, and Quality Systems; and Natural Sciences– an administrative assistant aids the chairperson. A departmental committee structure involves significant faculty participation in all academic affairs and students may also participate to some degree. All departments prepare Annual Action Plans aligned to the institutional Strategic Plan. Also, annual reports and other periodic reports are submitted to the Dean of Academic Affairs and other officers as deemed necessary.

Academic programming is congruent with program requirements. Course syllabi are frequently assessed and revised; and the faculty makes efforts to improve their teaching and satisfy administrative tasks associated with their academic duties. Most bachelor’s degree programs require some type of work-related practice. In those cases, agreements between the UPRAg and the sponsoring institution are signed to ensure that the educational experience is in accord to program objectives. Duration of practice, student evaluation, and student security issues are also discussed with the sponsors. Academic support strategies include tutoring, skills development practice (Math Tutorial Center, Academic Computing Labs, Writing Labs for English and Spanish), and professional counseling services. Students with some type of handicap receive special attention by a professional counselor.

Services to Student with Special Needs

UPRAg ensures that students with special needs received the necessary support services through activities specifically designed for this purpose. The Orientation and Counseling Department provides a special service program for high risk students. Through this program, students showing inadequate academic progress and students on probation are assigned a Counselor and received a series of group sessions—covering study techniques, time management, goal setting, and the like. Those individual attentions, helps the students gain appropriate skills for academic success. Thus, outcomes assessment activities are designed to assess the degree of effectiveness. To date, this program is only serving a small proportion of high-risk students and should be expanded.
Program Outcomes and Assessment

Different instructional methodologies are used; most departments include lectures, class discussions, problem solving, and group exercises, out of class projects and assignments, and written and oral presentations of reports. Laboratory practice and computer applications are also used when appropriate. Some departments practice role playing and case study discussions. Recently, some professors have been making use of the Electronic online forums to promote group discussions and critical thinking. Evaluation strategies include grading of exams, quizzes, projects, and reports. Direct observation of laboratory experiments and class presentations are also frequent.

Program Outcomes: Withdrawals, Completion and Retention Rates

Total withdrawals by program (7.11) 2004-05 to 2008-09 reveal that withdrawals rates have dropped slightly yet insignificantly, while program retention rates (retention rate is defined as that percent of the class which graduates or completes transfer requirements in 150% of normal time) indicate a gradual increase (7.12) Completion rates reveal that a more concerted effort must be made in order to increase program completion rates. More specifically, the data reveals the following information in relation to completion based on 2002-03 freshmen student cohort and retention rates during the 2005-06 to 2008-09 academic years:

- BA program completion rates 46%
- AA program completion rates fluctuates 3%
- Transfer program completion rates 26%
- Articulated transfer programs completion rates fluctuates 21%

The data also reveals the following information in relation to retention rates:

- BA program retention rates fluctuates between 77% and 80%
- AA program retention rates fluctuates between 42% to 54%
- Transfers program retention rates remain unchanged
- Articulated program experienced a significant increase in retention rates from 36% to 65%

The data (7.13) also reveals that almost 25 % of the first-year total student population voluntarily withdraws from the college, while approximately 4.7% is suspended and 2.9% is allowed to continue studies on probation. However, the cause of departure of
most students is still undetermined. Although several hypotheses have been considered, a comprehensive assessment of the situation is warranted. Thus, withdrawal, completion and retention have been identified as areas to receive priority during the next development cycle (2011-2015).

**Figure 7.1 Grade Distributions and GPA Averages**

It is important to point out that grade-point-average percent distributions by program type indicate a very similar distribution for BA, AA, transfer, and articulated transfer programs. In general, the grade distribution numbers reveal that approximately 74% of the student population scores grades of A, B, or C; 14% receives D or F, and 12% receive a withdrawal or incomplete grade. Students with the highest G.P.A. are enrolled in bachelor’s degree programs while those enrolled in associate degree programs score significantly less. (7.14)  

The numbers in the previous paragraph reflect normal distribution patterns, yet a significant area of concern is the grade distribution by department, specifically the department of in mathematics; grades indicate that 53% receive grades of D, F, withdrawal, or incomplete. These courses (in math) where students are failing should be identified as

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4 See grade-point-average percent distribution page 43 Fact Book [http://www.uprag.edu/opei_old/_private/FB2008-09CompletoPDF.PDF](http://www.uprag.edu/opei_old/_private/FB2008-09CompletoPDF.PDF)
critical since they are extremely untypical when compared to the grade distribution by department (7.15)\(^5\).

Clearly, better student performance in the critical courses would serve to yield better program outcomes, including higher retention rates. Improvement and assessment projects linked to theses courses are an absolute necessity. The Department of Mathematics has identified its basic courses for improvement and have considered several alternatives, including strengthening their tutoring services and offering a remedial courses. The Academic Senate has asked the Department to conduct a comprehensive assessment to determine the root-causes of the high failure and withdrawal rates. The assessment should put the Department in a good position to select remedial alternatives. It is expected that other departments will follow it.

**Adequacy of Program Descriptions Goals and Related information**

As part of the recent catalog revision process, all departments revised their materials assuring adequate up-to-date information of each program. Many departments produce their own information brochures. These brochures include well-organized information and data related to program objectives, admission requirements, instructional methodologies, resources available to the students, and courses offered, among other things.

**Program Objectives and Curriculum**

All programs have clearly stated objectives that respond to specific educational needs, and the course syllabi and curriculum activities show good congruence with these objectives. Courses are frequently reviewed by the faculty. These revisions are reflected in the constant up-dates of the corresponding syllabi.

**Program Projections and Outcomes Assessment by Academic Department (7.16)**

In accordance to UPR regulations, all new programs must be assessed after its first year of implementation. The assessment report is to be presented not only to UPRAg authorities, but to the Board of Trustees and the University Board. After that, internally, a

\(^5\) See distribution of grades issued by department page 44 Fact Book t [http://www.uprag.edu/opei_old/_private/FB2008-09CompletoPDF.PDF](http://www.uprag.edu/opei_old/_private/FB2008-09CompletoPDF.PDF).
A comprehensive assessment is required once every five years. The Dean of Academic Affairs’ schedules for program assessment is available in the General Archive assembled for the Puerto Rico Council of Higher Education (PRCHE). The topic of institutional and program assessment is discussed extensively in another chapter of this Self-Study Report, therefore, this section of the report will address the assessment of the projections involving specific academic pursuits that were established by the academic departments and the institution and were recorded in the UPRAg 2000-2005 Self Study Report to MSCHE. A brief introduction of each department followed by a concise assessment account of the projections that were made in the previous Self Study Report (UPR-Aguadilla 2000-2005 Self Study Report to MSCHE). (3.2) First are presented the degree-granting departments in order of their enrollment levels followed by two service-only departments; and finally, information about DECEP is also included.

**Department of Business Administration**

The mission of the Department of Business Administration is to offer: a) degree-granting programs in areas related to business administration, for both traditional and non-traditional students; b) business administration courses for students of other departments as part of their program requirements; and c) business administration courses for continuous professional improvement. As previously noted, the Department of Business Administration offered a flexible, non-traditional approach, Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) in which the student select up to two minors from a list of 21 minor options and/or up to two major from 5 majors options in the following professional field: Accounting, Marketing, Finance, Computer Information Systems, and Human Resources.

**Department of Natural Sciences**

The Department of Natural Sciences is charged with the mission of offering all courses related to biology, chemistry, and environmental science/technology. Besides the offerings corresponding to its own degree and transfer programs, it offers general education or specialized courses for students of other departments as part of their program requirements. As noted previously, the Natural Sciences Department offers the following programs: Bachelor Degree in Environmental Technology, Bachelor Degree in Biology with minors in Biology or Biomedics, Genetics, Bioinformatics, Quality System
Evaluation, and an Associate Degree in General Sciences. The department also offers transfer options to bachelor’s degree programs related to the natural sciences or to related health programs, and transfer to B.S. in Nursing - Articulated with UPR-Mayagüez.

**Department of Education**

Except for the English courses in Education, this department offers all education and physical education courses at UPRAg. The department offers a Bachelor’s in Arts in Elementary School Education and a transfer option program for Bachelor’s in Arts in Secondary School Education.

**Department of Office Systems**

The mission of the Department of Office Systems is to offer degree-granting alternatives in the area of office systems for regular students. Credit and non-credit courses for professional improvement may also be offered through the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies. The department offers a Bachelor’s Degree in Office Systems and an Associate Degree in Office Systems.

**Department of Electronics, Physics, and Quality Control**

The Department of Electronics, Physics, and Quality Control integrates three disciplines: Electronics, Quality Control, and Physics. The mission includes offering degree-granting options for the first two. The physics courses are offered to support the programs within the department as well as those from other departments. This department offers the following degree programs: B. S. in Electronic Technology, B. S. in Quality Control in Manufacturing and Services, and an Associate Degree in Electronic Technology.

**Department of Social Sciences**

The Social Sciences Department is charged with the responsibility of offering general education courses to students from others departments. The department offers an Associate Degree in Arts and a transfer program for students interested in completing a bachelor’s degree in a field related to the social sciences. Transfer program’s curriculum is
oriented towards fulfilling the requirements set forth by the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez or Río Piedras Campus. Students that meet the requirements obtain immediate acceptance to the bachelor’s degree programs in Political Science, Sociology, Economics, Geography, Anthropology, General Studies, or Cooperativism.

**Department of Humanities**

The Department of Humanities is charged with the responsibility of offering general education courses to students from other departments. The Humanities Department offers a transfer program for students interested in completing a bachelor’s degree in a field related to the humanities. Articulated transfer options from other Campus of the UPR System at the bachelor’s and associate degree levels are also available. The programs offered are the following:

a) non-articulated transfer to Bachelor’s in Arts degree offered by other institutions, especially the UPR at Mayagüez or Río Piedras;

b) articulated transfer to the bachelor’s degree in Humanities offered by the UPR at Río Piedras;

c) articulated transfer to the bachelor’s degree program in Television and Radio Communications Technology offered by the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo;

d) articulated transfer to the associate degree program in Television and Radio Communications Technology offered by the UPR at Arecibo.

**Department of English**

The Department of English offers general education courses such as: a the two-semester Basic English –which is a requirement for all students, Intermediate English, Grammar and Composition, and Introduction to Literature. The department also offers program-required specialized courses in English –such as Technical Writing, Conversational English, and Business English. Through the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, the department also offers courses for professional or personal improvement. In addition, the English Department offers a Bachelor’s of Arts Degree Program in Teaching English at the Elementary or Secondary Level. This Program
was approved in June, 2001. The Program meets all the requirements of the Department of Education of Puerto Rico.

**Department of Spanish**

The Department of Spanish offers the two-semester Basic Spanish course which is a requirement for all students. Other general education courses such as Spanish for Honors Students, Spanish Grammar, Puerto Rican Literature, and Spanish Literature are also offered. Some professional and technical programs require specialized courses such as Report Writing, Oral and Written Communication, and The Sociology of Communication. All degree-seeking students at UPRAg are required to take one or more Spanish courses. The department also offers courses for professional or personal improvement through the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies.

**Department of Mathematics**

The Department of Mathematics’ mission is to contribute to the general education of students by strengthening their quantitative skills and logical reasoning. Almost all degree-granting programs at UPRAg require one or more courses in mathematics. The department offers mostly basic courses. Some students, however, require higher level or specialized courses such as calculus, statistics, and computer related courses. The department serves all degree-seeking students at UPRAg that are required to take at least one course in mathematics. Through the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, the department also offers courses for professional or personal improvement.

**Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies**

The Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DECEP) is an academic unit under the Dean of Academic Affairs. It provides diverse academic offerings for professional, technical, and personal improvement. Offerings include credit courses for professional improvement, short non-credit courses, lectures, conferences, seminars, and workshops. The DECEP is regulated by the Board of Trustees: Certification number 190-2000-2001 (7.6). This certification defines the institutional policy and strategic direction for continuing education and professional studies at the UPRAg, granting the unit an
adequate degree of administrative and fiscal flexibility. As a result, the DECEPS is capable of responding to specific needs through custom-made courses and programs, and other flexible educational experiences.

**Enhancement of Teaching and Learning through Assessment of Goals & Outcomes**

During the past five years (2005-2009), UPRAg has effectively accomplished two major goals: a) the integration of new technology to the teaching learning process giving greater attention to improving its technological infrastructure and b) the institutionalization of assessment practices. Within the context to these goals, the professional development of the faculty in skills and strategies involving the integration of multimedia technology for teaching and the assessment of learning have been two areas of concentrated activity. The following section will focus on specific information related to: a) the integration of instructional technology, b) a description of efforts to institutionalize a culture of assessment that promotes excellence in administrative and educational performance, c) the emphasis on accreditation initiatives, and d) other assessment initiatives.

**Technological Resources and Instructional Support Services Infrastructure**

UPRAg operates as unified network of information that is supported by UPR-System’s technological infrastructure. This network of information is supported and maintained by as unified infrastructure of equipment and human resources. The Office of Information Technology (OTI) provides the administrative and academic computing services. This office is headed by a director, which responds directly to the UPR-President’s Office. The Office of information technology has 10 Windows-based servers that are connected to UPRAg and provide direct and efficient access to all subscribed data bases and the Internet. These servers are dedicated mainly to support academic and administrative processes as well as Internet research and communication. In addition to these servers, the library and the departments of mathematics and English at UPRAg have their own servers, for a total of 13 servers at the local institutional level (See report on expenditures, *Informe de uso de la cuota de tecnología* 7.17.)

The computer network at UPRAg is a fiber optic system connected to the UPR System network via a T1 line. This connection system allows the institution to be able to
continue to operate technologically because it is activated automatically when the main line connection fails for some reason. It transmits at speeds of 100 "megabytes" per second (MBPS). Currently the University has main line connection type "Ethernet" which operates at a speed of 100 MBPS and a backup line connection which runs at speeds of 45 MBPS. In recent years, UPRAg has also installed a wireless network with 14 reception units distributed across the entire Campus (See report on expenditures Informe de uso de la cuota de tecnología 7.17)

**Classrooms and laboratories containing technological equipment**

The University also has a total of 17 laboratories for academic and teaching, 5 labs for general purposes, and 42 meeting rooms equipped with computer technology. All laboratories have computers and technical support provided by CETEM until 1 August 2010. From August 2, 2010, the Office of Information Technology (OTI) has carried out the technical support services to all academic departments. (See Self-Study Report 2005-2009, 90-92. 3.2)

**Technology & Computing Management**

One of UPRAg’s goals, stated in its Strategic Plan 2006-2011 is the development of information technologies (see Strategic Plan 2006-2011 3.1, p. 9, 25-26, 48, and 62). UPRAg has made great strides in this area in recent years. The institution has made a major financial investment in developing a technological infrastructure and in the technological training of administrative and teaching personnel. The development of technical and pedagogical skills has made possible the incorporation of technology in both administrative and academic pursuits. The annual budget provides allotments for equipment and training of personnel.

**Instructional - faculty**

Instructional strategies are the mechanisms that operationalize pedagogical knowledge in order to address students’ academic and personal development. In the classroom, the teacher integrates multi-media technology to create better learning environments and facilitate the inclusion of all students in the process of learning.
Technology, especially computer based technology, enhances the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

The syllabus for each course provides a detailed description of the course, which includes: requirements, goals, content, timeline, instructional strategies, evaluation strategies, and references. The discussion of each course’s syllabus is an essential topic which is covered at the beginning of the course. All course syllabi are revised on yearly bases and are posted on the Dean of Academic Affairs’ web page.

All academic departments have web pages where relevant information is posted; and many faculty members have their own web page or subscribe to an individual UPRAg maintained web page known as Moodle (abbreviation for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) which is a free and an open-source e-learning software platform: Moodle is also known as a Course Management System, Learning Management System, or Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Most of the faculty at UPRAg use computer or multimedia technology to carry out the teaching and learning process. Both faculty and students prepare reports and documents using digital formats; as are electronic portfolios, hybrid courses, blogs, wikis, Power-Point, and Skype. In addition, the faculty uses resources such as videos, CDs, video conferencing, web, and research-based instruction. Each faculty member and student at UPRAg has an institutional account to access the technological resources that are available.

The teaching faculty incorporates the use of technology in their courses in many ways: The primary way in which technology is used is through the use of the Moodle Learning System. The Moodle Learning System allows faculty members to use a variety of instructional web-based tools. The creation of courses online using the Moodle platform is an essential resource that allows access to online course content, and promotes peer focus group discussion. At present 12 online courses are being offered during the 2010-2011 academic year; Instruction time for these courses consists of three-quarters of online contact hours and the remaining time is dedicated to on-site classroom-instruction. Plans for additional online courses have been developed; toward this end, the faculty
development effort will continue until all faculty members have the skill and know how to develop and implement online courses.

Other Support Resources & Services

Library

It is also important to note that the Campus Library was assessed and received positive recognition by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in June 2007. It is also important to note that the Campus Library has now moved into its new building, which provides additional and modern furnishing and technological resources. The library provides various instructional-support services and technological resources. The Campus Library maintains its own Web site which can be accessed at http://biblioteca.uprag.edu.

New Library Enrique A. Laguerre

The Campus Library maintains subscriptions to many of the most outstanding academic and educational data bases; specifically, the library subscribes to 80% online databases.

Among the most important and used services that are provided are: electronic reserve, easy-access virtual reference resources, orientation and instructional modules on specific research skills and information technology related skills, audiovisual services, and the loan of equipment (digital projectors and laptops) to students and faculty. Thus, the UPRAg library ensures that its resources and services are accessible to professor, administrative staff, students and the general community.

The name of our Library is in honor to Professor Enrique Arturo Laguerre-Vélez. He was a Nobel literature prize nominee. From Moca, Puerto Rico he was one of the most prolific writers that published novels, short stories, plays, criticism, and journalistic pieces in Puerto Rican newspapers. Most of his novels are essential reading of Puerto Rican literature courses.
Library resources also include more traditional on-campus and equally valuable resources, as are: books, films and movies, dictionaries, and specialized reference and instructional manuals in different formats. All resources are available through the online public access catalog, including the PDF documents of the electronic reserve. Online databases also faculty and students to access free full-text reliable sources of information, which include: books, magazines, journals, documents, and other information resources.

**Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM)**

The Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM) was created in the year 2001 under the auspices of the Department of Education of United States, under the Federal Title V Program, *Strengthening Hispanic Institutions*. In the beginning, UPRAg received a grant of $2,014,116, which was used to create CETEM so as to incorporate the recent technological advancements to the process of teaching and learning. CETEM is now an integral part of the resources at UPRAg. Among its general objectives is to teach the faculty and students basic computer and multimedia technological skills, and as a byproduct enrich classroom instruction strategy and improve the overall academic achievement results. A major part of CETEM’s effort has been devoted to developing the technical and pedagogical support infrastructure to facilitate the integration of educational strategies and techniques aimed at improving the overall teaching and learning process.
CETEM also provides support services in the form of loans of equipment (computers and other multimedia resources) for activities related to course work and/or for orientation and instructional activities offered to the general community. As part of its services, CTEM has established a laboratory for workshops that are offered to facilitate the production of educational materials by the faculty. CTEM facilities include the administration of several computer labs throughout the Campus. CTEM personnel regularly develop, sponsor, and carryout workshops and instructional activities. The Center also provides access to manuals and tutorials in digital and video formats; several of these resources can be accessed on the CTEM portal at: http://cetem.upr.edu (7.19)

Assessment of Academic Offerings Involving Technology

There are several institutional instruments reflecting assessment of how to gage the impact of technology in academic offerings. One of these is the Alumni Questionnaire (2003 -2005) (7.20) During this three year period, the institution experienced a great advancement in the integration of computer related skills to classroom instruction. According to the study, more than 75% reported that learning in their specific discipline of specialization was influenced greatly by the integration of technology. It was also reported that 70% of the alumni increased their logical and critical thinking ability. And more than 70% of the graduates expressed that they were able to develop and use learning skills on their own. Lastly, about 80% credit the institution as the key to their development in the area of technological knowledge and skills.

Another assessment that demonstrated student satisfaction of the integration of technology related skills was the Graduates’ Profile (2007) (7.21). This study provided valuable data and insight about the education received at the UPRAg. The data included information related academic instruction and social and institutional aspects in which this graduating class was involved. Various services and resources were highlighted in the study (p. 16-19); such as: academic aspects, the faculty, the physical facilities, and the curriculum’s general-basic courses and specialty courses.

The Graduates’ Profile (2007) (7.21) study’s purpose was to conduct an assessment of the satisfaction of UPRAg’s graduates with the institutions programs, services and
resources. The study revealed that 81% of the graduates stated that the institution was instrumental in developing the workplace computer related skills. In addition, about 78% of the participants reported that UPRAg had an enormous influence on their discipline of specialization. Moreover, the data can be summarized as follows: more than 86% of the graduating labeled the quality of the general curriculum courses as either excellent or good, while more than 93% felt that specialty courses were excellent or good.

A third study worth mentioning was the Seniors’ Profile of 2008: According to this study, 83% of the graduates stated that the institution was instrumental in developing computer related skills for professional use. In addition, about 96% of participants were of the opinion that the UPRAg had an enormous influence on their discipline of specialization. The assessment report can be summarized as follows: more than 85% of the graduates labeled the quality of the basic courses as excellent or good; while more than 94% reported that specialty courses were excellent or good.

Moreover, a fourth study, the 2009 Graduate Profile revealed that 87% of the graduates stated that the institution was instrumental in developing their computer related skills for professional use. And in addition, about 97% reported that the institution influenced had an enormous effect on their discipline of specialization. The assessment data can be summarized as follows: more than 90% of the graduates recognize the quality of the basic courses as excellent or good; and more than 89% rated the specialty courses as either excellent or good.

Integrating the IT and Multimedia Technology in Education

The teacher preparation programs in English and Elementary Education have made great achievements in integrating technology into the classroom. The use of technology in education continues to challenge teacher preparation programs to help new teachers develop the necessary skills to incorporate new technologies in their classrooms. The program requires candidates to become proficient in incorporating technology in their disciplines. The program consists of a general education component and pedagogical content area courses which emphasize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the teaching profession and the use of multimedia technology throughout the curriculum.
The results of the Puerto Rico Teacher Certification Examination (PCMAS) evidence the quality of our educational offerings. These state required licensure tests are developed and administered by the Office of the College Board of Puerto Rico and Latin America. Results from this test attest to the achievements that have been made in the area of the integration of technology. Overall, candidates have achieved a pass rate above the island-wide cut scores. The following table illustrates these results:

Table 7.5: Pass Rates on Puerto Rico Teacher Certification Test (PCMAS) Content Licensure Tests for Initial Teacher Preparation in English and Elementary Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Years</th>
<th>Test Takers English</th>
<th>English Overall Pass Rate %</th>
<th>% Passing State Licensure Test English</th>
<th># of Test Takers in Elementary Education</th>
<th>Elementary Education Overall Pass Rate %</th>
<th>% Passing State Licensure Elementary Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>N=14</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>N=94</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>N=25</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>N=50</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N=46</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Accreditation and Learning Assessment

This section will focus on data and information related to the effect that professional accreditation is having on: a) program quality improvement, b) faculty involvement in assessment, c) student learning, d) support services, and e) resource allocations. Previously throughout this Self-Study Report, it has been reported that UPRAg’s goals and objectives are aligned to UPR System’s strategic goals which are addressed in the document *Ten for the Decade 2005-2015* (2.3), *Certification number 123*. *Ten for the Decade* is a guide and a contract of principles and action, which identifies desirable institutional life parameters for the UPR System. The document provides guidance for planning and delineating areas of institutional endeavors which in turn will be assessed and evaluated in the coming years.

Several years of continuous effort have led to important accomplishments. One of the major institutional objectives is the professional accreditation of all professional degree programs. The accreditation process has yielded very positive results for our academic programs. It is important to distinguish the professional recognition of the business management program, which has been accredited by the *Association of Collegiate Business*
School Programs (ACBSP). On the other hand, UPRAg’s teacher preparation program (PPM), worked hard to achieve accreditation and received recognition by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) which is a professional association with a mission to ensure excellence in English language teaching. The PPM has submitted accreditation institutional report and program accreditation is pending final approval scheduled for November 2010 by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). 7

Another department that is in the process of professional accreditation is UPRAG’s Department of Orientation and Guidance; professional program accreditation of this program by International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) is expected during the 2010-2011 academic year. University and college counseling services play a vital role in higher education. The goal of acquiring IACS accreditation is to ensure and maintain high professional standards and to improve the quality of counseling services. IACS standards define professional quality and establish the criteria that will aid UPRAG’s Department of Orientation and Guidance in its effort of assessment and improvement of services.

Efforts are also being made to achieve the accreditation of the Departments of Electronics’ bachelor’s degree in electronics. This proposal was submitted for UPR approval and was subsequently returned for revision. This effort is still ongoing and program goals and curriculum objectives are being revised in order to comply with Technology Accreditation Commission Accreditation Board for Engineering & Technology (TAC-ABET) accreditation standards. Accreditation for this program is underway and approval by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology is expected by December of 2010.

Furthermore, the Office Systems Department is immersed in the process of complying with the accreditation criteria established by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools Programs (ACBSP) for its bachelor’s degree program in office systems. Furthermore, although at this time, no program of the Natural Sciences Department has

7 See Teacher Preparation Program: Institutional Reports – NCATE: http://ncate.uprag.edu/ (7.22)
been accredited by professional entities or organizations, all academic programs have received licensing and accreditation by the *Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education* (PRCHE).

As stated previously in this chapter, the Center for Educational Technologies in Multimedia (CETEM) continues advancing the emblematic goal to incorporate multimedia technology to all facets of the teaching and learning process. More specifically and as noted previously, CETEM has had a tremendous impact on the effort to develop the institutional capacity to support the teaching and learning with multimedia and integrated online resources. It is important to highlight that this effort permits the offering of several online courses in every academic department.

It is also important to report that UPRAg’s assessment initiatives have been reinforced in an effort to develop a culture of continuous assessment of all institutional pursuits. The Office of Academic Affairs has created the position of Dean Assistant for Assessment and Special Accreditation Projects. This official is in charge of coordinating the planning and implementation of program assessment and accreditation efforts. In addition, each program has an assessment committee and a coordinator that is in charge of supervising all assessment endeavors. Currently, almost all departments have projects developed assessment instruments and are in the process of executing and gathering relevant data and information that provides valuable insight to enhance teaching and learning.

In an effort to increase retention of our students, the Orientation and Guidance Department instituted a course, the INTD-3019 (Integration into the university life), which is delivered in a series of workshop on topics relating to students integration to a college environment. Student persistence in academic study depends on many factors; for example, the quality of the academic courses, academic support services, economic aid, and a healthy physical environment, to mention a few. The Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of Students Affairs have joined efforts to design a plan for student retention that tackles all these issues effectively. Some important measures such as a mentoring program in natural sciences and the enrichment of extra-curricular activities sponsoring cultural events have
implemented. The institution has worked diligently to provide online services for students, among them: the processes of admission, notes online, pre-enrolled and the electronic payment of scholarships.

With relation to our physical facilities, UPRAg has several initiatives aimed at improving our physical surroundings and services. For example, the institution will soon be inaugurating its new Campus Library. This accomplishment will improve the services provided and will create a more pleasant environment. This will also permit the reorganization of the interiors of what is now the "old campus library," and will free much needed space for classrooms and faculty offices. The completion of the construction of electrical substation, promises to resolve much of our problems of insufficient energy capacity. This project will alleviate the frustrations associated with the lack of proper electrical infrastructure. The construction of an annex at Humanities building will include a music hall, which will provide spaces for instruction and recreation. Another initiative is underway to enhance medical services by expanding the present medical facilities.

In relation to the assessment of learning, it is important to recognize the importance of including all departments and academic programs in the effort of gathering the data and information. UPRAg is engaged in a process that aims to develop a culture of continuous assessment in all areas involving academic and administrative services. The goal is to maintain excellence in education through the constant assessment of the results. The institution’s general assessment plan aims to ensure:

- an emphasis on the process of teaching and learning in order to make it relevant and valuable
- mechanism of self-reflection in which evaluates the same process of appraisal in order to achieve a dynamic of meaningful participation;
- a sequence of implantation conducive to the gradual domain faculty on assessment methodologies;
- create a process to establish strategic direction to meet the requirements of the students and the program implementation;
- create an environment that fosters and encourages innovation and creativity
have a plan of appraisal results (outcomes assessment) with evidence that these results are used to develop and enhance the academic programs; and

ability that academic programs meet its mission and objectives depends on the quality, the number and deployment of its faculty and staff.

The assessment initiative is linked to UPRAg’s overall effort to achieve the accreditation of professional programs by recognized professional organizations. It is important to mention the key measures that have been instituted by the different departments during this process of accreditation:

Develop short and long term plans of action.

Implement specific assessment plans for each program and department:

This includes the design of assessment instruments, such as questionnaires to employers and graduates, aimed at employers or supervisors; for the assessment of learning activities: development of assessments aimed at gauge the teaching and learning process and student achievement.

Carry out personnel and faculty meetings on regular bases to specifically focus on the analysis of assessment issues and procedures so that the process leads to recommendations aimed at improvement of educational services.

Enhance faculty teaching skills and assessment techniques:

Provide faculty training workshops and professional development activities in the area of assessment; and specifically focus in areas such as: effective use of the technologies of computing and communication, improving services, effective reporting, and procedural rules and ethical issues.

Increase the number of faculty members that hold doctoral degrees by supporting and providing financial assistance.

Promote academic collaboration between the different programs and coordinate professional improvement by integrating the community in the assessment and improvement initiatives.

UPRAg effort to create and institutionalize a culture of continuous assessment and improvement has led the Academic Senate and Administrative Board to approve various institutional certifications that are aimed at supporting the professional development of the faculty and the improvement academic services. The following significant administrative decisions have been made during the past decade:

Academic Senate Certification 2003-04-15. (7.23) Established that new faculty members to be hired must have a doctoral degree in their area of specialty or must
commit themselves to start doctoral degree studies in a period no longer than two years.

- Administrative Board Certification 2003-04-70 (6.1) Amends Certification 2003-04-15 to require that the new faculty must be enrolled in doctoral degree studies on a full-time basis, and that the University must be agreed upon between the professor and the Dean of Academic Affairs.
- Administrative Board Certification 2005-2006-37 (6.3). Sets the criteria for granting tenure status to the faculty members.
- Administrative Board Certification 2005-2006-44 (6.4) Amendment the procedures of requesting and processing financial aid assistance and licenses to the faculty and regulates the graduate studies academic progress report.

The aforementioned certifications reflect the UPRAg’s interest and commitment to academic excellence.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

During the past five academic years (2005-2010), UPRAg has effectively accomplished many important objectives on its way to achieving the emblematic goals that were set in its Strategic Plan 2006-2011. Those achievements have been described in this and other chapters of this report; however, it is important to conclude this chapter by commenting on the general conclusions that arise from the analysis of the findings and the corresponding recommendations.

This institution has singled out information technology, instruction and learning, and professional accreditation as the focus areas for institutional improvement; consequently, these areas are the implicit and explicit priorities for this report. Thus, the institutional steering committee has provided an objective and unbiased account of the areas mentioned, as the data and information provided in the previous sections and chapters of this report demonstrate. As a general conclusion with relation to the focus areas and academic offerings, it is important to note that UPRAg has accomplished and in some areas exceeded its set goals. However it is also necessary to conclude that much improvement must be forth coming. With limited resources, UPRAg has accomplished its set goals for
the period of 2005-10; yet there is much to be done in order to sustain our progress and move forward toward other pursuits. The following conclusions and recommendations provide an initial consideration of the areas and endeavors that should occupy the institutional efforts in order to improve our educational offerings in the coming years.

**Instruction and Learning**

Although UPRAg has an institutional assessment plan that includes student learning, specific and clearly defined goals are important, it is recommended that the UPRAg design and implement a systematic assessment process with the specificity and inclusion of program, curriculum, courses, student learning, and teaching effectiveness. Assessment should be carried out to ensure the quality of instruction and the participation of the faculty in improvement activities. While information and data are being collected, the data must be reviewed on regular basis and should be part of a regular formal assessment process; this practice will eventually lead to improvement of teaching and learning.

- Data collection should include specific assessment data about student learning and teacher effectiveness.
- A review of the assessment methodologies employed in courses in their respective categories must be considered. For example, it is recommended that the assessment effort concentrate on examining instructional assignments, tests, and narrative explanations supplied by students and teaching faculty along with the numerical data of outcomes. This effort should ensure that assessment methods are reported for each objective; identifying effective and ineffective practices along with making concrete suggestions for improvement, wherever possible.

**Professional Program Accreditation**

The great effort made to obtain recognition and professional program accreditation of several degree programs has involved different institutional components in a monumental assessment effort and much has been achieved. However, UPRAg has yet to develop and institute a systematic approach for assessing its academic offerings. More specifically, UPRAg must design and institute an assessment plan directed to evaluate the relevance of the components of its academic offerings and their effectiveness. Together
with the recommendation listed above, this task should be directed at contributing to students’ educational and professional experience.

- Comprehensive assessment of departmental practices should be planned and implemented; including comparison to peer institutions should be instituted; and more student and employer satisfaction data is essential.
- In order to obtain a more up-to-date student satisfaction and concern, instruments must be designed and administered on a regular basis. Particularly useful would be information about students’ preferred methods of learning and recommendations for program improvement.

**Information Technology (IT)**

It is important to note that UPRAg has invested substantial assets to develop an infrastructure of material and human resources in order to provide access and use of IT. Over the past eight years, the institution has been literally immersed in a concerted effort of designing, managing, and administrating this IT infrastructure. In this pursuit, UPRAg has demonstrated the ability to apply technology systems to support and facilitate the administration of its academic programs and has effectively established standards and procedures. The institution has also made great strides in using and integrating these technological resources to enrich and improve the teaching and learning process. It can be concluded that UPRAg must continue to invest in IT in order to improve upon the excellent foundation that has been provided, despite the difficult economic times. The following specific recommendation should be considered in planning future endeavors in the area of IT.

- Set key priorities which should include classroom technology (learning spaces) and instructional technology.
- Plan to establish classroom technology in all; this effort should include software for classroom PCs and personnel to provide support.
- IT improvements should involve resources for implementing and extending activities to enhance communication and collaborative learning, and teaching strategies that integrate course content across programs and curricula.
- Expand the online learning offerings
- Consider ways to better identify student needs for online courses so that required courses can be planned more effectively for online offering.
- Activities should be instituted for discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, including identification of best practices in online learning.
- Data are needed from departments to assess resource obstacles to IT classroom integration and online course 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 thinking, and informational competencies.

Introduction

A committee consisted of three faculty members where giving the assignment of determining if programs at the UPRAg provide for the students to acquire proficiency in general education skills that include at least the following basic general education skills: oral and written communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, technological competencies and study of values from diverse perspectives. The committee collected information from documents such as the UPRAg’s general catalogue, departmental action plans, assessment plans, strategic plans, and others, in order to determine if it complies with these basic skills. ¹

Institution integral education

The mission of the UPRAg emphasizes that the integral development of the student will be a very important part of university activities. For the institution integral education is the development of students in terms of content knowledge, attitudes in general and concentration courses. The mission of the institution indicates that “students will be prepared in courses

¹ What specific skills should be emphasize as a general education requirement or if is necessary the establishment of a unique general education component for all the Bachelor program is a matter of eternal debate. After a brief historical overview of general education programs at Chicago, Columbia, and elsewhere, doctor Anne H. Stevens, Associate Professor in Literature of the UNLV (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), in her article “The Philosophy of General Education and Its Contradictions: The Influence of Hutchins” (8.1) discusses the tensions between the teaching of skills and the teaching of facts, between training in general knowledge and training for a particular career, between democracy and selectivity in education, and between universalist and historicist approaches to the great books.

Dr. Michael F. Middaugh in his book “Planning and Assessment in Higher Education” said that general education used to be defined in terms of cross-disciplinary courses taken, that is X number of credits in humanities, Y number in mathematics and so on. The problem, he said, was that completion of courses did not necessarily translate into demonstrable competencies. For that reason the MSCHE, he also said, helps its members institutions to further distill the list of general education requiring a minimum competencies that incorporate at least study of values with diverse perspectives and competencies in communication (oral and written), reasoning and technological competency appropriate to the discipline (MSCHE, 2006, 48)
related to their program, but also in general skills. The curriculum will help students make clear links between skills (such as analytical reasoning, quantitative and information literacy, make critical judgments, ethical reasoning and effective communication skills) developed in the general and major education courses (See Catalog 2009, page 8) (8.2). Every academic program selects those courses, appropriate to the discipline that:

- contribute to the integral development of their students, balancing their technical and professional preparation with general education experiences that will serve to enrich their personal lives making them more cultured and socially sensitive and responsible persons;
- provide them with knowledge and skills both in the areas of their majors as well as in general areas such as quantitative manipulation and interpretation; oral and written communication, computer literacy, critical thinking and effective teamwork;

The commitment of our institution with the acquisition of general skills can be observed through the integration of the general education component in basic and major courses throughout the curriculum. Evidence can be found through the following institutional documents:

- Strategic Plan (Goal 3)
- Campus General Catalog
- Departmental Action Plans
- Learning assessment projects of the different academic departments (PAEE)

As stated before, general education is established in the mission, goals and objectives of the campus. The general component distribution is established in the 2006 Periodic Review Report (3.3), submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In this report general courses represent, on average, 35% of the academic load of bachelor programs and 26% of the academic load of associate degrees. For example, in the Business Administration curriculum the general education component (see table 8.1) is equivalent to 48 credits or 40% of the total credit hours required for graduation.
Table 8.1 – Business Administration Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR</th>
<th>Minimum Credit Hours in General Education</th>
<th>Core Requirement</th>
<th>Business Requirementbeyond Core</th>
<th>Buss Electives</th>
<th>General Electives Credit Hours</th>
<th>Total Credit Hours Required for Graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Infor Systems</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Education Component Requirements (48 credit hours)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interdisciplinary Seminar</th>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>Mathematics I</th>
<th>Liberal Arts I</th>
<th>English I</th>
<th>Spanish I</th>
<th>Mathematics II</th>
<th>Liberal Arts II</th>
<th>English II</th>
<th>Spanish II</th>
<th>Comp.Inform.System I</th>
<th>Liberal Arts III</th>
<th>English III</th>
<th>Spanish III</th>
<th>Comp.Inform.System II</th>
<th>Liberal Arts IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Integration of general knowledge through all the academic program

Academic programs incorporate the requirement in communication (oral and written), reasoning and technological competency appropriate to each discipline, considering also specific requirements of their profession. General education is integrated in academic programs through many of the courses including basic and major courses. For example, the study of values with diverse perspectives was addressed in the courses listed below.

- Competencies related to ethics and values is covered in the following courses:
  - ADMI 4019 (Social Responsibility of Free Enterprise), FILO 3005 (Ethics), FILO 4046 (Environmental Ethics), EDPE 3001, (Language Arts in the Elementary School), EDPE 3006 (Social Studies in the Elementary School), EDPE 4115 (The Teaching of Science and Math in the Elementary School), EDPE 3317 (Children’s Literature), EDPE 4335 (Seminar and Curriculum For Elementary Education), EDPE 4340 (Practicum in the Elementary School), EDPE 4005(Seminar and Curriculum For Secondary Education), EDFU 3017(Evaluation For the Learning Process), EDPE 3018 (Teaching English as a Second Language), EDPE 3221 (Introduction to Literature I), INGL 3222, (Introduction to Literature II) y INGL 4326 (Children’s Literature); FINA 4037 (Investments), MERC 4036, (Public Relations); SICI Data (Communications) 4285; REHU 4408 (Organizational Behavior); CONT 4017 (Accounts and

*The students select four courses among the social sciences, natural sciences and humanities courses.*
Systems Intervention, SOFI 4985 (Internship, Practice Seminar), SOFI 3017 (Interpersonal Relations), SOFI 4038 (Office Administration), SOFI 3210 (Introduction to Transcript in Spanish), and SOFI 3355 (Procedures in Office Administration).

- Competencies related to information skills are provided through the Information Competency Program offered by the library and evaluated thought a pre and post test.

**Table 8.2 Attendance to workshops offered to students and faculty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>1,601</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>2,103</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>2,678</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6,382</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>6,494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Competencies related to technology and computer literacy The acquisition of technological competencies is observed through the participation of students in the workshops that are offered, with the purpose of developing basic technological skills, through the Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM). These workshops covered programs such as: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Front Page and Outlook among others. (Please see the report on student participation in workshops: student component in Appendix 8.3). The following table presents yearly data of students’ participation in workshops offered by CETEM.

**Table 8.3 Attendance to technology workshops offered to students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1st semester</th>
<th>2nd semester</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,372</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>2,180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each technology workshop offered by CETEM (Table 8.3) participants carry out exercises where they apply what was learned during the workshops. All workshops are evaluated by the participants through an evaluation form. The feedbacks obtained through these
evaluations are used to improve the content, techniques and other circumstances related to the process of learning.

**General Education and the assessment Plan for Student Learning**

Faculty members proposed to the Deanship of Academic Affairs an assessment plan (PAEE) to evidence how well the student acquired or not an specific general skill (Details in General Plan of Assessment 8.4) On the other hand, each department makes an assessment (8.5) of the acquired skills (PAEE) of the general education courses that are related to their curriculum. Table 8.4 presents some of the assessment tools developed and used by faculty to measure the acquisition of general competencies.

**Table 8.4 Assessment tools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>Portfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>Essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral and written reports</td>
<td>Field experience (visit reports)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work plans</td>
<td>Instructional modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubrics</td>
<td>Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>Analysis of oral and written comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log books</td>
<td>written comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification exams</td>
<td>Pre and post tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections/critiques</td>
<td>Reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS statistical package</td>
<td>Technical reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tell me more” package for practicing the English language</td>
<td>Analysis of teaching related situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrative courses in public and private schools of the area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The empowering of the faculty in the learning assessment process contributes in the development of the general education skills. In 1990, the institution, through the Interdepartmental Assessment Committee, identified a group of general education skills that are important for the institution. These skills have been modified through the years. The updated general educations skills listed in the Institutional Assessment Plan are: oral and written communication skills; mathematics and computing skills, critical thinking, management and application of technology; the ability to access, manage and use information; and the ability to engage in teamwork.

The mastering of the general education skills are measured through different activities: standardized tests, course and departmental projects, capstone projects, field experiences
evaluations, performance on licensure examinations, etc. More details about the learning assessment process are included in Chapter 11.

Each department has a general education component requirement in communication (oral and written), reasoning and technological competency appropriate to each discipline, considering also specific requirement of the profession. These skills are assessed through projects of departmental assessment. These are also measured in acquired knowledge tests that are administered at the campus since 2008. The test pretends to assess those competencies and knowledge considered necessary for student performance within their discipline. (See reports of general acquired knowledge tests 2008-2009, (Appendix 8.6).

General competencies are aligned with academic programs because they are:

- contemplated in goal 3 of the campus Strategic Plan and departmental plans
- evaluated in most courses
- emphasized in syllabi
- evidenced in departmental reports
- aligned with curricula
- included in assessment plans of student learning (8.7) of almost all departments [2010, p.12]

Competencies are aligned and interrelated with program requirements. This statement is supported by the following examples:

- Conceptual framework with alignment of the teacher preparation curriculum (Appendix 8.8)
- Student Learning Assessment Plan, such as the Office Systems Department (Appendix 8.9)
- Self Study submitted to Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (Appendix 8.10)
- Course Syllabus (available in the Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs)

More evidence can be obtained thru:

Rubrics - examples of Student Assessment Plan (PAAE) Department of Natural Sciences (8.11)

Assessment Rubric:

- laboratory reports
- evaluation oral presentation
- cooperative work
- demonstrations
- test
Scores obtained in the acquired learning tests (See reports of Acquired Learning, Appendix 8.12)

Outcomes of the course Introduction of University Life (INTD 3019). This course covers topics that help student integrate to university life. It was created during the 2008 academic year. The course seeks to help students develop skills in the basic social sciences and attitudes that will help them a better adaptation to the university requirements. Courses and society in general (Please see syllabus of INTD-3019 course Appendix 8.13).

Student grades in basic courses. (See grade distribution in general courses, Appendix 8.14)

Certification and license exams (PCMAS). Table 8.5 presents the results of these tests taken by students of the Teacher Preparation Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Years</th>
<th>Number of Test Takers in Elementary Education</th>
<th>Elementary Education Overall Pass Rate</th>
<th>% Passing State Licensure Elementary Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>N=94</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>N=50</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>N=46</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approval of education and specialty courses in general show an acceptable knowledge of the basic competencies of graduates, Student’s surveys (8.15) suggest that the majority of those students expressed satisfaction with the development of skills such as:

- Writing effectively in Spanish
- Talking effectively in Spanish
- Knowledge of information skills
- Being conscious about conservation of the environment
- Team work
- Logic and critical thinking

**Graduates satisfaction survey**

A survey (8.16) conducted to the graduate class of 2007 suggests that they understand that the institution helps them to improved areas such as:

- Oral and written skills in English
- Development of math skills
- Use of library resources
Application of the scientific method
Understanding of graphs

In that survey of 2007 there is a perception among the graduates that the institution contributed to the development of the following skills:

- 81% of graduates expressed that the institution was key in the development of skills in team work and in the use of the computer for professional use;
- approximately 76% of graduates thinks that the institution has contributed to the development of their logic and critical thinking;
- 77% of graduates expressed that the UPRAg helped them develop skills of independent learning;

**Quantitative reasoning: an area of concern**

The competencies related to quantitative reasoning are of great concern because of the low achievement of students in this area. Even though students have basic courses and tutorials, this has not been enough to help them to solve the deficiencies that have been pointed out by them. This finding is evidenced through courses such as MATE 3171 Pre-Calculus I, 3172 Pre-Calculus II, MATE 3001 Introductory Mathematics I, 3011 Quantitative Methods, and MATE 3031 Calculus I, 3032 Calculus II. The grades obtained in these courses demonstrated lack of quantitative skills (see appendix 8.17).

The table 8.6 presents an example of MATE 3011 (Quantitative Methods for Business) which, on the average, one out of two students failed (D, F, W) the mathematic course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A,B,C</th>
<th>D,F</th>
<th>W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lacks of proficiency in this general course affect their performance in other major courses such as chemistry, physics, accounting, statistics, and electronics. Despite of the low performance of students in the courses they offer, the Mathematics faculty does not have an assessment program.
The Certification 2006-2007-12 of the Academic Senate (8.18) authorizes that students with a score of less than 650 on the College Board will be enrolled in basic mathematics course. There is a petition to do the same with Natural Sciences and Electronics Departments students. There is a research in progress to determine the effectiveness of this approach. Also, the certification 2006-2007-18 of the Academic Senate (8.19) required that the Academic Deanship and the Department of Mathematics design and develop a plan to improve course pass rates.

Tutorials program
This campus has established tutoring programs and workshops to deal with the deficiencies in areas such as: mathematics, technology, oral and written communication. The English Department has also developed a tutorial with that purpose. Please see a description of the TELL ME MORE tutorial at: http://es.tellmemore.com/ensenanza_superior (8.20). After rigorous analysis of the documentation, the committee understands that steps should be taken to improve the acquisition of general education knowledge.

Strengths, concerns and recommendations

Strengths:
- There is an institutional policy for the validation of general education courses by all the campuses of the UPR system.
- The institutional commitment to improve the teaching component of the general education has resulted in higher scores in the teacher certification exam (PCMAS).
- The successful accreditation of programs such as the Library through the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), Business Administration Department by ACBSP, the Elementary Education program and the Secondary English by NCATE.
- Establishment of students learning assessments programs in almost all departments
- Establishment of the test “Prueba de Conocimiento adquirido”.

Concerns
- There is a lack of proficiency in quantitative reasoning and low achievement of students in math courses.
- Despite of the low performances of students in math courses there is no assessment program in the department.

Recommendations
- Create remedial courses in the areas of mathematics, Spanish and English for students with college entrance exam scores lower than those established by the academic
departments. For example if math scores are less than 650 points in the Department of Natural Science students should take other courses that prepare them to achieve competencies in this discipline before they take chemistry for example (please see letter from our Dean of Academic Affairs, Appendix 8.21)

- Give immediate attention to students with deficiencies in oral and written communication. A program should be established to address this issue.
- Integrate more reading and writing to all courses of the curriculum
- Incorporate activities on written and oral communication skills in exams and other academic activities.
- Standardize the process of assessment
- Establish an assessment program at the Math Department
- Discuss with faculty the findings and projects of assessment to make possible long and short term goals. Integrate activities within the work plans of different departments.
- It should be required that all departments develop assessment projects. These results should be used in the design of future strategies to improve teaching
- Create remedial courses to improve those needed skills in math, Spanish and English
- Determine minimum scores in the College Board exam in Spanish, English and Mathematics at each academic department of the institution, if scores were lower than the minimum score required, remedial courses should be available to correct the deficiencies of students. The remedial courses should be taken before they are admitted to the program they selected.
- Re-evaluate the formula used for admission of students to the UPR System. The restructuring of this formula in 1995 has led students with lower performance in English, Spanish and Mathematics to be accepted into programs of the UPRAg.
- Establish, through the Academic Senate, the policies that will regulate the general education program

Summary

The general education component was designed with the purpose that the students demonstrate the mastering competencies at the college level. The general education component emphasize skills such as oral and written communication in Spanish and English, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, ethical thinking and values, technological skills, and information competencies in order to develop students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to contribute effectively to the society. There is a close relation between demonstrable competencies in the general education area and academic performance.

For the institution, integral education is the development of students in terms of content knowledge in the general and concentration courses. The mission of the institution indicates that “students will be prepared in courses related to their program, but also in general skills”. That is why the continuous assessment in each academic program is essential to reach the academic excellence toward the professional and personal development of the students.
CHAPTER 9  Related Educational Activities (Standard 13)

STANDARD 13: RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES  The institution’s programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet the appropriate standards.

Introduction

Most of the education-related activities carried out in the UPRAg is different from the regular degree-granting academic programs in terms of its content, focus, location, mode of teaching, and/or sponsorship. In its mission statement, UPRAg expresses its commitment to provide educational alternatives that respond to the needs of Puerto Rico, particularly the community of the northwestern part of the island through academic options that include professional certificates, and credit and non-credit courses for professional, technical and development growth.

These education related activities make possible a lifetime, ongoing learning and meet the particular needs of non-traditional students.\(^1\) (9.1) The University endeavors to respond appropriately to changing regional needs by offering innovative programs and courses that are developed, monitored, and improved via quality-focused policies and procedures. It satisfies the off-Campus community needs for personal, professional, and cultural enrichment, and provides

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\(^1\) An NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) study examining the relationship between nontraditional status and persistence in post-secondary education identified non-traditional students using information on their enrollment patterns, financial dependency status, family situation, and high school graduation status (Horn 1996). Specifically, in this study, a nontraditional student is one who has any of the following characteristics:

- delays enrollment (does not enter post-secondary education in the same calendar year that he or she finished high school);
- attends part time for at least part of the academic year;
- works full time (35 hours or more per week) while enrolled;
- is considered financially independent for purposes of determining eligibility for financial aid;\(^2\)
- has dependents other than a spouse (usually children, but sometimes others);
- is a single parent (either not married or married but separated and has dependents); or
- does not have a high school diploma (completed high school with a GED or other high school completion certificate or did not finish high school).

Horn (1996) defined "non-traditional" on a continuum based on the number of these characteristics present. Students are considered to be "minimally non-traditional" if they have only one non-traditional characteristic, "moderately non-traditional" if they have two or three, and "highly non-traditional" if they have four or more.
for voluntary participation in different activities for the benefit of the external community. This chapter discusses the implementation of the following modalities on the Campus:

1. International Student Exchange Program and Internships abroad
2. Experiential learning (out-of-class on the job training experiences)
3. Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies
4. Evening University Program
5. Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia
6. Direct Community Services through voluntary organizations

**International Student Exchange Program (9.2) and Internships abroad**

The International Student Exchange Program was established in 2002-03 as an initiative of the Presidency of the University of Puerto Rico. As part of a commitment to internationalize the University, twenty two agreements were signed with several higher education institutions. A Guide for International Studies (9.3) is available for this service.

Many students enroll in internships abroad to further their knowledge in their area of specialization. Business Administration students enroll in Hispanic Association of Colleges, University Internships (HACU), and Natural Science students enroll in a great variety of universities, especially during the Summer.

Some of the universities in which our students do their internship abroad are the following:

- Universidad Complutense de Madrid, España (www.ucm.es) (9.4)
- Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, España (www.uam.es) (9.5)
- Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara (UAG), School of Medicine, Mexico
- Purdue University
- Texas A & M
- Michigan State University
- Rutgers/UMDJ, New Jersey
- University of Notre Dame
- Cornell University
- Rutgers University
- Ohio State University
- University of Iowa
- University of Minnesota
- Stanford University
Many of our students enroll in the International Student Exchange Program to broaden their experiences. Table 9.1 presents the total number of students enrolled in the International Student Exchange Program internships from 2005-2010. Through these programs, students explore historical and/or contemporary similarities and differences between our culture and other countries and re-examine the contexts and experiences of their own lives and how these shape their encounters with others. They take undergraduate courses and participate at undergraduate symposiums to acquire background knowledge which in turn, help them excel in their internships. Those who work in research courses can present their findings at different activities carried out in the institution. Some students receive paid invitations to present their findings at national symposiums. Some students may attend one or more internships. For more evidence please see Appendix 9-6.

Table 9.1 Students enrolled in internships abroad from 2005-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experiential learning

The students at UPRAg acquire out-of-class on the job training experiences in various ways. The University offers practice courses as part of each academic program which provides the students the experience to expose and put into practice the knowledge, skills, concepts, and theories acquired through their curriculum of study. As a requirement, students are assigned to a practice center in a real work atmosphere, related to their major area of study. The industry, commerce, non-business organization, grade schools and other governmental dependencies can be used as practice centers. The practice is equivalent to 3 to 6 credit-hours.
The UPRAg policies and procedures for experiential learning involve two areas: practice courses and internships. Practice courses are required by the academic departments of: Education, English, Natural Sciences, Office System, Electronics, Quality Control, and Business Administration. During the first semester of the academic year 2010-2011, the Academic Senate issued Cert. 2010-2011-04 in regard to the new requirement for practices courses. Policies and procedures established by that certification sustain the quality and level of learning.

The practice manuals prepared by the Academic Departments offer the students the direction and the necessary support to ensure the success of the educational experience. To assure that the experiential learning is appropriate to meet the academic program standards the students are evaluated by their supervisor in the institution or agency where they practice and by the professor who serves as coordinator of the practicum. Especially, the recommendations given by the supervisor to present opportunities to change eliminate, or add new topics, either in general or concentration courses.

To sustain the quality, quantity, and level of learning, the students must prepare periodic reports and a final project. For example, the English and Education Departments teaching practicum is the clinical experience that offers the student teachers the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge and skills acquired throughout their years of formal preparation. The student teacher’s performance will be evaluated and documented with the following instruments.

- Formative Evaluation Instrument based on the competencies of the student teacher
- action research oriented project evaluation of the daily lesson plan
- instrument for the final evaluation by the cooperating teachers
- instrument for the organization of a monthly seminar (optional: to be decided by each supervisor); attendance to the practice center, seminars, and meetings
- “Teacher Work Sample” Instrument (Instrument to evaluate the candidate’s final portfolio)

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2 See Appendix 9-9 for the Senate’s Certification 2010-2011-04 for the new policies
The final grades of each student are compiled and analyzed by the practice supervisor. The results demonstrate the candidate’s level of development and aid in reflection and revision of the process involved in practice teaching.

In the Business Administration Department, the practice students are evaluated by the supervisors in the agency, professional office or business where they practice. The supervisors evaluate the students in general areas such as:

- quality of work
- capacity to work in group
- initiative
- fulfillment with the business norm
- ethical behavior
- problems identification and solution
- written and oral communication
- analytical Capacity and organization
- use of technology and computer programs
- attendance and punctuality

At the end of each semester, the evaluations of the practicum are submitted by the supervisors and are used for assessment purposes. An Advisory Board created for the Business Administration and Office Systems programs have the task of using the data to submit recommendations to the faculty to improve their programs and support the academic procedures to assure the quality of the services.

Table 9.2 presents the departments offering the practice/internship courses and the total amount of students enrolled during the academic years 2005 -2010.
Table 9.2  Students registered practice internship courses 2005 – 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>2005-06</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>ADMI 4047  Accounting</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computerize Information System</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>TEAM -4001</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
<td>EDPE – 4340  Teaching Practice in the Elementary Level</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>EDPE - 4340</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Practice in the Elementary Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>EDPE - 4246</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Practice in the Secondary Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Systems</td>
<td>SOFI 4985</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Control</td>
<td>COCA 4995</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>284</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>1315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix 9.7 that present the off–campus practice centers to which students are assigned by the following areas of study: Natural Science, Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Human Resources and Computerize Information System.
Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies

The Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DECEP for its Spanish acronym) of each of the units of the University of Puerto Rico share the mission of providing innovative academic programs and activities, with or without credit, directed at facilitating life long learning.

Non-traditional Educational Activities

The creation of non-traditional academic activities has been the result of the institution efforts to meet the greatest possible number of educational needs in the community. They include the continuing-education program as well as contacts with outside groups or businesses to aid in the professional and social development of their members.

The Board of Trustees Certification number 190-2000-2001 (7.6) (Institutional Policy and Strategic Direction for Continuing Education and Professional Studies of the UPR) reorganized the Division to make its program respond, thoughtfully and recurrently, to the needs of several populations of non-traditional students in the community at large. This new concept led to the design and offering of professional studies and for credit and non-credit special programs aimed at professional groups and organizations.

Section 6.1 of Certification number 190 states that “academic activities and other services originated by the DECEP shall be self-funding and financially self-sufficient.” The DECEP’s administrative and budgetary structure provides it with the flexibility needed for carrying out its programs efficiently and responsively. Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the certification establish the academic offerings and the market to be served.

The objectives of the DECEP are to:

- create awareness in students, alumni, and the community about the importance of continuous learning as a tool for personal and professional development geared to active participation in the social, cultural, and economic development of the country to improve the individual and collective quality of life
provide a credit and non-credit academic offer that is innovative, broad, dynamic, flexible, and that responds to the educational needs and training of non-traditional students in the different sectors of the Puerto Rican community:

- the main objective of credit courses is to provide evening academic programs. The Evening Program (Universidad Nocturna para Adultos [UNA]) offers credit and professional improvement courses in Business Administration.

- the main objective of noncredit courses at the DECEP is to provide education and retraining to professionals of industries or public and private agencies to help them complete their continuing education hours, renew their professional licenses, or improve professionally. Offerings are divided into the following categories:
  - short noncredit courses for professional and personal improvement;
  - workshops, seminars, and conferences;
  - continuing education activities sponsored by professional organizations or other dependencies of the university; and
  - training programs designed according to specific needs of particular entities, companies, or agencies. Public and private organizations or industries request that the DECEP offer the non-credit courses or seminars they need. The DECEP prepares a proposal using institutional resources.

The vision of the UPRAg is geared to work as a long-lasting link with its alumni while satisfying many academic needs of different communities in Puerto Rico. This important relationship is made possible through an innovative, broad, dynamic and flexible academic offer and high-quality services that contribute to the professional and personal development of non-traditional students.

DECEP at Aguadilla has undergone significant changes during the last ten years due to the demands of academic services from members of the community. The efforts have been aimed at satisfying the professional needs of the clients, students and the community by helping them develop new sets of skills to succeed in various professions, especially in education related careers:

- developed environmental and conservation programs aimed at training members of the
community for green jobs in Puerto Rico, such as a course in Renewable Energy Systems

- a variety of topics related to aspects of human and professionals knowledge is the essence of the academic richness of the Division (An example of its wide coverage is the *First University Center of Training and Development for Children with Down Syndrome and their Families*)

- offers workshops as well as seminars on current health topics (aging, child abuse, abuse of the elderly, treatment of patients with Alzheimer, anger management, teaching strategies for teachers and parents of deaf children, and reading and writing skills) to local healthcare workers

- one of the most important achievements has been to create awareness on the importance of conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources among professional, such as engineers and electricians, through the renewable energy course

- creation of several projects, such as an alliance with the local Northwestern Consortium to train and place unemployed people in green jobs through a course certified by the *North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP)*

- during the last five years (2005–2010), the Division has created short courses, seminars and training workshops for health care professionals, insurance agents, appraisers, real estate agents, engineers and professional electricians; among the most popular and successful non-credit courses offered are: Sign Language, Digital and Manual Medical Invoicing, Real Estate Agent, as well as Appraisals and Insurance. A significant increase in the demand and offer of these courses and workshops suggests that the Division is satisfying the training needs of professional people that are seeking to increase their knowledge and skills in current topics

- the Division has carried out a very successful project called *Center for the Understanding of Science and Mathematics through Technology* which has benefited a total of three hundred and five (305) teacher participants. This project trained many science and math teachers, grades 4 to 6 and 7 to 9, with the objective of increasing students’ scores and performance in the achievement tests offered by the Department of Education. The specialized training for mathematics teachers has benefited one hundred fifty (150) teachers so far.
The following table presents more evidence that non-credit offerings and their related activities are open to the general community and meet their needs.

**Educational Activities**

Tables 9.3 present the total educational activities offered per academic year and the total amount of participants served for the periods of 2005 to 2010.

**Table 9.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Activities Offered per year</th>
<th>Participants per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005 – 06</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 – 07</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>3,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 – 08</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>2,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 – 09</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>2,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 – 2010*</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 – 2010</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>14,614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also Appendix 9.8 that present a summary of courses and activities offered by the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies for the academic years 2005 to 2009.

The Division has divided its educational services in the following way:

- short courses, seminars, and workshops in current high-demand topics such as sign language, medical billing, conversational English, computer repair and introduction to computers
- technical training in renewable energy;
- educational services through proposals directed at teachers from the public school system
- alliances with local industry - Infotech, Puerto Rico Technoeconomic Corridor (PRTEC) and the Internet Society of Puerto Rico
- alliances with other local institutions of higher education, private and public
- service the community with workshops on technology for community leaders and
students with low academic achievement
  o alliances with government agencies; Department of Education, Northwest Consortium, the Municipality of Aguadilla and Head Start
  o professional development including professors and non-teaching employees of the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla
  o continuous education courses and workshops for professionals;
  o north American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) provider
  o courses to pre-university students
  o first University Center for children with Down Syndrome and their Families.

In addition, to contribute with the social and economic development, the Division is offering courses designed for creating and innovating small businesses and a certificate in entrepreneurship. Moreover, as started in its mission of social advancement and environmental commitment, the DECEP offers a course on renewable energy that is contributing to the sustainable use of natural resources. This program has been offered since 2009 and has impacted approximately 218 individuals.

Figure 9.1 presented the impact of the Renewable Energy Workshops given by the DECEP of UPRAg. Professionals from different regions of Puerto Rico participated in those workshops.

**Figure 9.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality/Total/Color zone</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northwest (10) – Yellow</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center (6) – Grey</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South (7) – Violet</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East (13) – Orange</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan (6) – Turquoise blue</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest (11) – Yellow</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>218</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UPR Ag’s DECEP Technological Transfer

The Division has centered its administrative and management strategies on the transfer of technology in the context of the design of a network of knowledge and information that promotes the development of educational offerings. The collaborative agreements for that technological transfer will be achieved with the help of groups of people from different sectors of society through access to knowledge and experience of innovative professional resources. The Division will support state and municipal government educational institutions, enterprises and non-profit organizations with educational offerings benefiting the whole northwest region of Puerto Rico. To achieve a wider range of coverage to the population that seeks this type of educational offerings the Division will have Google docs to create data bases and share documents. Since August 2010, the Division has been working on a very comprehensive data base of possible clients. DECEP currently has 2,850 possible clients on the promotional mailing list. Other technological applications that are being used are Facebook and Twitter and a blog site (9.9) for promotions of projects besides the main website (http://www.uprag.edu/decep). (9.10) Promotional brochures of educational offerings are also published in several Web 2.0 applications such as Scribd, Issuu, Slideshare and YouTube.

Degree Options: Evening University (DECEP)

The Board of Trustees Certification number 190-2000-2001 (7.6) (Institutional Policy and Strategic Direction for Continuing Education and Professional Studies of the UPR) reorganized the Division to make its program respond, thoughtfully and recurrently, to the needs of several populations of non-traditional students in the community at large. This new concept led the DECEP to offer, according to Section 4.3, academic programs to the non-traditional students.

The Evening Program (UNA- Universidad Nocturna para Adultos) offers, in coordination with the Business Administration Department, the BBA and the five majors for working professionals or students who need to complete a major in Business Administration. Going back to school when a person already has a family and work, can be a real challenge. And yet many adults return to the classroom every year at every age. Since 1993, the Evening Program has
enabled non-traditional students to complete their bachelor's degree while balancing the demands of a career and family.

“The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 90 million individuals participate in some form of adult education each year, including training and basic education offered outside traditional higher education. To serve this immense market, most colleges have structured programs and services specifically for adult learners. **Forty percent of American college students, or almost 6 million people, are 25 years of age or older.**” (9.11)

Non-traditional students have strengths and challenges that make their university experiences unique. The Evening Program of the DECEP helps ease the transition to university life by helping non-traditional students draw on their assets and experiences and apply them to challenges that may arise from integrating academics and university into their already busy lives.

**Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM)**

**Faculty training for online courses**

One of the services that CETEM provides to the faculty is the offering of workshops in the area of instructional technology, emerging technologies and the use of Moodle, the official platform used in our Institution for offering online and hybrid courses. CETEM also offers, upon request, individual assistance and training to faculty in these areas. The effectiveness of these trainings is documented by the increase of faculty members using Moodle to upload instructional material for their courses. This evidence is saved at CETEM in recorded tapes by semester and academic year. See Appendix 9.12 for a list of faculty members that have taken workshops to be certified members in the field related to multimedia online courses.

**Online credit courses**

Certification 73-2006-07 (9.13) of the Board of Trustees, that established the Distance Learning Institutional Policy, and Certification 25-2007-08 (9.14), that established a System Wide Policy for the acceptable use of information technology resources through the UPR, presented the guides for an efficient and effective use of the technological resources. In UPRAg there are already several distance-learning initiatives.
Appendix 9.15 present a list of the faculty members that used UPRAG-Virtual (Moodle) to complement their courses. Our first ten online credit courses offered at UPRAg started in the second semester of the Academic Year 2009-2010.

The online courses are offered through the Center for Educational Technology in Multimedia (CETEM Spanish acronym for Centro de Tecnología Educativa en Multimedios) as a result of the emblematic project of UPRAg titled, “Educación Multimediática y la Universidad del Siglo XXI 2007-2011” (2.7). The Center has the following main objectives:

- develop faculty’s pedagogical skills in terms of multimedia instructions
- develop students’ basic computer skills
- provide a technical infrastructure and educational support to facilitate educational strategies using multimedia
- improve general educational outcomes that emerge from the teaching – learning process, and
- offer workshops and short courses every semester, in different areas, covering technological and pedagogical aspects.

The faculty that teaches these online courses is academically qualified and have received graduate level training in a field related to multimedia instructional development from different universities in the United States and Puerto Rico. They have also participated in continuous workshops offered instructional technologies through CETEM, the development of online courses, and the use of Moodle as the online course management platform named UPRAg Virtual. CETEM also offers individual assistance to the faculty that teaches online courses (list of faculty members 9.12). Upon request, assists other faculty who use the Web to enhance their courses. More information about CETEM can be found in Chapter 7, Educational Offerings.

CETEM developed and still maintains an electronic database that is regularly updated with information of faculty members that have taken technology related workshops at CETEM since June 2002, the date that the Center was established. That evidence assures that the faculty that teaches online courses are qualified. The offering of online credit courses through this emblematic project covers missions and goals established in “Diez para la Década”, a structured plan to transform the educational offering and services of the University of Puerto Rico at
Aguadilla in order to adjust to changes that are occurring and that will occur in the future in the academic world and the society, in general. The mission and goals specifically covered are:

- M2-08 Provide the faculty the adequate academic tools for the professional development and actualization of the methods of teaching and learning
- M5-02 Provide effective accessibility to network and technology equipment to students, ex- alumni and faculty and offer training to strengthen information technology competencies; and
- M2-06 Promotes in a firm pace different alternatives for faculty teaching; experiential learning, online teaching, and team teaching among others.

**Hybrid and online courses**

Online courses have the same requirements as traditional courses. The syllabus must fulfill the same requirements as a regular course, but adapted to an online environment. Faculty that develop online courses follow a guideline created by the Director of the Center and a general guide developed by the University of Puerto Rico for syllabus development. Faculty interested in developing an online course follows a procedure which requires the approval of the Department Chairperson and the Dean of Academic Affairs. Then, the faculty member designs the course using the *Guideline for Developing and Evaluating Courses to be Offered Online* developed by CETEM. This guideline is also used by the *Committee of Evaluation of Online Courses*, composed of faculty members certified in the field related to multimedia instructional development from different universities in the U.S. and P.R. The Committee evaluates the courses to be offered online, submits recommendations and, after a final revision, approves the course.

**Institutional measurements for efficiency of online courses**

The first ten (10) online courses were offered during the second semester of the Academic Year 2009-2010 and, up to the present, these courses are still being offered. An online evaluation concerning satisfaction and efficiency of learning is required at the end of each academic semester from the students who are taking these courses.
Technical support to offer online courses

The Institution provides technical support to offer online courses. All students that register for online courses are required to take a two-hour workshop before or during the first week of class. This workshop promotes effectiveness by emphasizing the instructions, procedures, and use of the platform and its features. A Service Coordinator assigned by CETEM, is in charge of offering technical support to students and faculty. Technical support may be given in person or online through the use of a live chat which is available from Monday through Friday. *Frequent Ask Questions* are available 24/7 and can be accessed at. Personal assistance is provided by scheduled appointments at CETEM. There are also tutoring videos available at YouTube Channel that can be accessed through the Web site or directly from YouTube. (See Appendix 9-16 for a CETEM video tutorial list)

Direct Community Services through voluntary organizations

The common functions of the universities across the world include teaching, research, service to the institution constituents, and services to the external community. To the external community the university constituents are expected to be involved in a variety of services activities, mostly voluntary participation. Hence, the community service takes the form of educational, cultural, and other services which may contribute to social progress, economic growth or cultural development of individuals, groups or the community as a whole. It depends on individual interest and the needs of the community, which are constantly changing. Community service at UPRAg is flexible enough to allow for these changes. See Appendix 9-17 to see some examples of direct community services by students, faculty, academic or administrative personnel and/or organizations recognized by the Deanship of Student:

Community service at University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla consists of activities, which are carried out by members or groups of the UPRAg community. These activities are:

- engage contacts with individuals, groups and organizations, external to the University, enabling them to share in the benefits of university expertise and/or facilities
- contribute to social progress, economic and cultural development of individuals, groups and organizations and/or the community in general; and
are offered as a service through the teaching function, the sharing of expertise, the provision of access to facilities and/ or through special programs and services.

Conclusion

- The response from students, faculty, and citizens in terms of educational related activities has been very positive. Still, there are areas in some of the sections that need to be further strengthened.
- The non-credit offerings by DECEP are in accordance with the institutional mission and goals. A notable increase has been demonstrated on continuing education for Health Professions and Teachers Professional Development courses. The Continued Education and Professional Studies Division has shift to Technological network to promote its offerings on line.
- Experiential learning (Practices and Internships) experiences have standards of rigor consistent with good educational practices.
- CETEM has come to fulfill the technological need of UPRAg. The educational activities provided by CETEM should induce better results in students’ academic success; furthermore, it empowers the faculty and the students to better meet the technological needs of the 21st century.

Recommendations

- Improve the collection of data related to internships.
- Increase the Certificate Program.
- Develop courses online to provide distance learning through DECEP.
- Design and implement an assessment plan to measure the quality of related educational activities.
CHAPTER 10 Institutional Assessment (Std. 7)

STANDARD 7: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with the accreditation standards.

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the institutional assessment process. Also included in this chapter is how we are implementing this process and its effectiveness in the collection of data (which contributes to the institutional planning), relocation of resources and on improving institutional practices campus-wide. All this effort is aimed at helping us achieve our mission and goals established in accordance with accreditation standards.

Development of the Planning Process

The University of Puerto Rico began its planning process in 1995, when it developed the first Strategic Plan (1995-2000). In 2000, we started the second cycle of planning with the 2000-2005 Strategic Plan. In 2006, the third cycle of planning began with the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan.

The 2006-2011 Strategic Plan, like the two previous plans, was preceded by an institutional self-study process, as required by the Council on Higher Education of Puerto Rico and the Middle States Council on Higher Education, as part of the requirements for licensing and accreditation, respectively. This process has enabled us to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our institution in order to achievement our goals and objectives to the new educational challenges, all focused within the mission and vision of our institution. (Strategic Plans) (2.2)

For each of the evaluations and revisions of the different strategic plans, a committee comprised by students, faculty and administrative staff was constituted. The strategies used in the evaluation process were:

- The Comprehensive Assessment of the Implementation of Strategic Plan for the corresponding period, produced by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR). (Comprehensive Assessment) (10.1)
- Development of questionnaires to collect the feelings about the priorities of the various university components such as academics, students and administrative staff. (questionnaires and results) (10.2)

- The analysis and discussion of data collected in focus groups.

These plans were the result of a series of activities obtained from the study, reflection and analysis of information gathered through the above strategies. This allowed us to identify the factors that require further attention in our institution. To complete the evaluation process, we aim to achieve the goals and objectives established, and to validate the commitment of each of these, in their proper time periods, through its ongoing review.

**Link between the Institutional Strategic Plan and the UPR Systemic Plan**

The current planning cycle, 2006-2011 Strategic Plan was impacted by the Administrative and Academic Plan, known as *Ten for the Decade*, approved in May 20, 2006 by the university Board of Trustees. (Certification no. 123 2005-06) 2.6

*Ten for the Decade* was developed to guide planning efforts in the UPR System. Its purpose was to create harmony and unity, recognizing the diversity among its units. The document proposed 10 strategic development areas, each consisting of a series of objectives and strategies. These have been implemented gradually since 2006. (*Ten for the Decade*) 2.3

Although our 2006-2011 Strategic Plan was being drafted for the final date when *Ten for the Decade* ended, the institution proceeded to align the goals of both plans (*Strategic Plans Matching* 2.2). We, then, analyzed and identified the gaps between the two plans. As a result, 81% of all the objectives set out in *Ten for the Decade* would be addressed within our Strategic Plan (*Gap Analysis*) (10.3). In order to close the gaps identified, the Administrative Board of the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla endorsed amendments to the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan. (Certification no. 2007-08-18) (10.4)

After a process of analysis, the Central Administration of the UPR, with the purpose of achieve the objectives in the document *Ten for the Decade*, reorganized into 7 (seven) operational lines (OL). The activities, actions or objectives contained in each of these are summarized as follow:

**OL1 Academic Offerings** - Activity or action to improve and update the academic offerings of the university.

**OL2 Research** - Activity or action directed at making the areas of university research more competitive, such as actions that support the upgrading of laboratories,
procurement of external funds and, in general, any object that impacts the area of research.

**OL3 Institutional Climate** - Activity or action to have the institutional environment of a modern university, global, and harmonic relationships, such as improving spaces conducive to study and research, support for sports programs, student associations, the cultural and artistic events.

**OL4 Link** - Activity or action used for establishing relationships with the community, alumni, external agencies, government or other non-governmental organizations.

**OL5 Information Technology** - Activity or action to establish the infrastructure and automated services suitable for a modern institution.

**OL6 Communications** - Information activities or actions intended to communicate the activities and events sponsored by the university as well as those aimed at strengthening the image of it.

**OL7 Continuous Improvement and Budget** - Activities or actions to control operations and continuous improvement and all actions performed with the purpose to meet the requirements of government, accrediting agencies, OSHA and other regulatory agents.

In order to achieve the necessary harmony and create a document that would facilitate the allocation of the budget by operational lines, the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) aligned our Strategic Plan with the Strategic Systemic Plan, within the context of the seven operational lines. *(Alignment of Strategic Plans) 2.4*

Through this analysis it was observed that the systemic plan was too comprehensive in budgetary terms, to put it in short-term function. Each unit of UPR-System selected projects that were linked to their strategic plans, which would be given special attention. These were selected taking into account their priorities according to human, fiscal and physical resources existing in the unit. *(Emblematic Projects) 1.6*

For the 2007-08 academic year a project was selected per unit. This was known as *Distinctive Emblematic Project* and constituted an articulated effort between the base and the academic leadership of all units of the University of Puerto Rico System to enhance the progress and achievements of *Ten for the Decade*. 
The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla selected as a special project the following:

**MULTIMEDIA • EDUCATION AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE XXI CENTURY**

*(Distinctive Emblematic Project) (10.5)*

In its strategic context this project aims to strengthen the support for teaching in all matters relating to the use of information technology. Experimenting with new ways of teaching and learning needed to deliver online courses. Development, provision and monitoring will be discussed in later chapters, especially in Chapter 9, "Related Educational Activities."

In addition, the UPRAg gave special attention to another of its selected project. It was:

**Accreditation of Academic Programs and Services.** In the strategic context this project aims for the external professional accreditation for all programs and support services that are sensitive to recognition. This is an essential element to keep our institution among of the most competent universities. The development of this project will be discussed in the Chapter 11 "Assessment of Student Learning"

**Assessment and 2006-2011 Strategic Plan**

The 2006-2011 Strategic Plan of the UPRAg includes ten goals or priority areas that guide our institutional assessment activity:

- **G1** Respond to the social, cultural, and economic needs of Puerto Rico, particularly the northwestern region, through innovative, and relevant educational programs, considering both, degree granting and non-degree granting alternatives.

- **G2** Maintain an effective human resources development program.

- **G3** Improve general learning outcomes, keeping student integral development at the center of institutional priorities.

- **G4** Continue to effectively integrate the new Information Technologies (IT) into the teaching-learning process.

- **G5** Increase faculty activities in research and scholarship and involve students as part of their formal development.

- **G6** Increase external resources and net continuing education service revenues to no less than 20% of the total budget.

- **G7** Significantly improve administrative processes and student services.
G8 Expand and improve the physical facilities and natural areas of the campus, to achieve more effective integration in the new educational, social and technological contexts of the knowledge society.

G9 Maintain a positive and collaborative relationship between the institution and the external community.

G10 Ensure a management system that practices up-to-date management principles, responds affirmatively to the agreed upon academic standards of excellence, and directs its actions based on objective information.

In order to direct our efforts to achieve the objectives outlined for each of the above goals we have established a mechanism involving all academic, administrative and student units. This will integrate the planning and assessment process.

Below is a graphic model of the planning process and how the assessment processes is integrated in it:
Annually an Action Plan is requested from all the units of the institution. The Plan should include:

- activities or strategies to undertake to achieve the goals set,
- managers or persons responsible for carrying out the activities,
- indicators to be used as a measure of compliance, and
- date expected in which the activity or strategy described above should be realized.

It is the responsibility of each Dean to unify the activities and strategies of his deanship. The Director of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research integrates the action plans and
makes sure the objectives and goals outlined in our Strategic Plan are carried out. The Action Plan at the institutional level is published and distributed to the Deans; it is also posted on our website available the entire university community. (Action Plans) 2.6

It is at this point that the institutional assessment, through the years, has integrated the work of all academic, student and administrative units.

Assessment Activities

The OPIR is the unit responsible for the research and institutional assessment. At present it has a staff composed of a Director, a Research Associate, a Statistical Officer and a Secretary. This office is constantly working on a series of statistics and indicators to measure institutional performances, which are then used as reference for the assessment, analysis, report writing, preparation of proposals and others. In addition, complete comprehensive studies, by request or on its own initiative, on various issues of importance in the academic, student and administrative areas are prepared.

The following publications and documents describe some of the studies conducted by this office in recent years:

- **Fact Book** - A collection of statistical data and indicators to be published annually. The data covers a period of five years in which can be observed trends in administrative, academic and student affairs. These are useful in the preparation of proposals, reports and for decision making of the Chancellor and deliberative bodies of the UPRAg. (Fact Books) (10.6)

- **Statistics Summary** - Summary statistics and indicators to be published in the first semester of each academic year. Present areas of interest such as: budget, enrollment, academic progress and faculty. It is a tool for immediate use in decision-making. (Statistics Summaries) (10.7)

- **IPEDS Reports** - The United States Department of Education requires all institutions of higher education to complete a series of annual reports that make up the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The IPEDS reports cover seven main areas. The first area is institutional characteristics, which provides general information about the institution. The fall enrollment section includes full and part-time enrollment by race/ethnic group, age, and gender. Complete section gives statistics of degrees completed by type of degree, time taken, race/ethnic group, and gender. The graduation rate survey shows how many students in each cohort complete their degrees within the equivalent of 150% of the time stipulated for the degree, how many transfer to other institutions, the number of athletes in the cohort, and the number that complete their degrees in time and a half. Statistics are also given by race and age. Another section of the IPEDS provides information on full-time
faculty by rank, gender, status, and length of contract. Financial statistics and financial aid data are also provided in the IPEDS reports. The last section is a biennial report on the number of non-faculty staff members by occupation, full or part-time, gender, and race/ethnic group. (IPEDS Reports) (10.8) Then received a document known as IPEDS Feedback Report, which compares this information to our unit with similar institutions. (IPEDS Feedback Reports) (10.9)

- **Profile of Freshmen Students** - This is conducted annually and collects demographic data from high school students entering the university. In addition, data are collected as follows: if work while studying, their expectations of study, motivations to enter this school, areas that need help, skills in handling information technology and other resources. For the 2007-08 academic year the instrument was revised and amended. For the academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, the profile questionnaires Counseling and Guidance and Library Resources were merged, to avoid repetitive. (Profile of Freshmen Students) (10.10)

- **Graduating students** - This survey is held annually and collects the opinion or evaluation of graduate students in areas such as: (1) the contribution of the institution in the goals outlined in its immediate plans to study or work and develop their skills, (2) evaluation of services, quality of academics and physical facilities and (3) satisfaction with the institution. (Graduating Students) (10.11)

- **Alumni 2003-2004-2005** - Was conducted in November 2007. Demographic data, aspects of the academic area for continued studies, relationship to the study area in the UPR at Aguadilla, selected institution, satisfaction with the preparation offered were gathered. In the workplace: an activity which you are dedicated to, sector for which you work, wages earned. Evaluation of the institution: contribution to the development of skills, participation in activities, sectors and general satisfaction. (Alumni Survey) (10.12)

- **Annual Reports** - This is a compilation of information of academic, administrative and student achievements during the academic year and that are directly relevant to the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. (Annual reports) (10.13)

- **Analysis of Strategies to Increase Retention** - Analysis of the strategies used by the Department of Counseling and Guidance to increase overall retention rate to 87% was incorporated as one of the objectives in the Strategic Plan 2006-2011. Statistics rose which showed the changes due to the initiatives established so far and the effectiveness of these were assessed. (Strategies analysis) (10.14)

For the 2003-04 academic year the Board of Trustees of the University of Puerto Rico, in virtue of Certification 136, established a policy on the assessment of institutional effectiveness. By means of this policy it is now required that all units of the UPR System develop a culture of evaluation. In light of this certification, eight priority areas were identified for evaluating the working and institutional performance, these are:
- Admissions and financial aid
- Creative work and scholarly research
- Infrastructure for education, creative work, and scholarly research
- Renewal and development of academic programs
- Extracurricular activities
- Curricular supply and demand
- Effectiveness of the educational process
- Private fundraising

The Central Administration collects, analyzes and presents all data obtained from the units of the System, and then submits reports to the President and Board of Trustees. This has allowed both the President and the Board of Trustees to observe the strengths and weaknesses at a systemic level and evaluate the results. (*Cert. No.136-2003-04 Board of Trustees*) *(10.14)*

From the academic year 2004-05, the OPIR follow an annual program as established in this certification. It prepares and presents in monthly meetings at the Academic Senate of the UPRAg, reports about eight priority areas described above or other matters that are important for the institution. Those relevant academic issues were presented to the directors of the academic departments meetings and to the faculty, through their representatives at the institutional deliberative body.

The table below provides a list of reports on the institutional assessment that OPIR has made, published and presented to the Academic Senate of the UPR Ag:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 10.1 Institutional Assessment Presented to Academic Senate UPR-Aguadilla</th>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of Admissions</td>
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<td>Student Economic Aid Processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supply and Demand of Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>State of Fund Raising Capability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Activities and Student Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Program Renovation and Development</td>
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<td>Faculty Productivity</td>
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<td>Effectiveness of the Educational Process</td>
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<td>Support Structure for Faculty Productivity</td>
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<td>Strategic Plans Alignment and Representative Project</td>
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<td>Our Graduates 2003 - 2004 - 2005</td>
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<td>Institutional Climate (Strategic Operational Line 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ten for the Decade (Diez para la Década)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Satisfaction Inventory (Noel Levitz)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Retention</td>
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</table>

Use of indicators and evaluation measures

Institutional research reports conducted by the OPIR constitute an important resource for the assessment of institutional effectiveness. These reports, show the progress in some critical areas and identifies weaknesses that should be improved. The outcomes contribute to create awareness and promote discussion in the deliberative bodies about our strengths and weaknesses.

Here are some examples that demonstrate the systematic use of multiple qualitative and quantitative measures contained in institutional research studies described in the previous section.

1. **Analysis of Admissions** - Analyze our strengths and weaknesses and shows how effective we are in recruiting students.

   - **Purpose**: To improve our process to attract the best talent for our institution (Goal 1, OL-6 Strategic Plans).

   - **Indicators**: Demand vs. Offer, % admissions by alternative, % retention of admitted, % of enrolled, % demand for academic programs.
• **Strategies for improvement**: radio promotions, press, cinema and television at a systemic level. Technology platform is established to calculate the IGS, application for admission, payment of admission application, reservation of space, admission status and review. The staff of the Office of Admissions in this Institution delivers and collects personally the applications from the high schools, and this also includes the transcripts. They offer workshops to train high school counselors to work with the applications for admissions and figure out the student averages by electronic form.

• **Outcomes**:

  - 84% of incoming freshmen come from public high schools. This is more consonant with the mission of the University, which is to reach people with economic disadvantage.

  - The IGS of freshmen students increased, from IGS 273 to IGS 280, with respect to 2004-05 academic year.

  - We observed a 4% decrease in the retention of students admitted for the 2009-2010 academic year vs. the previous year 2008-09.

  - The grade point average of incoming high school freshmen students has remained at 3.40, for the 2009-2010 academic year.

2. **Student Economic Aid Processes** – Presents data, changes and trends in the process of granting financial aid to students.

• **Purpose**: To know the economic profile of the students we serve, and to maintain a positive and collaborative relationship between the institution and the external community. (Goal 9, OL4 - Strategic Plans)

• **Indicators** - % of students with financial aid participation, beneficiary vs. family income, % of students with full scholarships, analysis of university policies to determine eligibility, application process analysis.

• **Strategies for improvement** – Changes in eligibility rules for students (Certification No. 44, 2005-06, JS), adjustments in the computations based on current income in the light of economic changes, each unit of the UPR System administers the funds assigned, each unit of the UPR system will apply for funds directly to the Department of Education of the United States, the rate of eligibility for the student increased (changes in the allocation of federal funds), a computer and a person was assigned, to help students with their financial aid applications online.
• **Outcomes**

- The increase in the % of students with financial aid participation has been significant. There is an increase of 15.8% compared to the 2005-06 academic year. (2005-06 % participation was 68.3% vs. 2009-2010 of 84.1%). 76% of students receiving financial aid are eligible at 0, which means that they receive the maximum amount. This reaffirms the commitment under goal 9 of our Strategic Plan which seeks to maintain a positive relationship between the institution and the outside community, expanding access for socio-economically disadvantaged students.

- Currently, 100% of financial aid applications are done electronically, compared to 2005-06 when only 39% were completed electronically.

- Each unit of the UPR System requests and manages the funds individually. This means more responsibility for the Offices of Financial Aid, but will offer more independence in managing their funds.

3. **Supply and Demand of Courses** – Present trends, comparisons and indicators that help in the assessment of institutional effectiveness in some areas of education.

• **Purpose:** To improve educational alternatives and services available. Identify possible solutions to the critical points that may affect the quality and effectiveness of education. *(Goal 1.2, OL1 - Strategic Plans)*

• **Indicators:** Comparisons between the enrollment vs. the class section offer, proportion of students per class section, proportion of students per professor, course approval rate, and % of utilized space.

• **Strategies and improvement:**

- The Dean of Academic Affairs established more rigorous controls to avoid exceeding the size limits of courses.

- Identified critical courses (50% or more of the students obtain a grade of F, or W). More difficult courses were pre-calculus I (Mate 3171) and Pre calculus II (Mate 3172), Quantitative Methods I (Mate 3011), Calculus I (Mate 3031) and Calculus II (Mate 3032) in the Department of Mathematics. The Academic Senate asked the Department of Mathematics and the Dean of Academic Affairs, to develop a plan to reduce the problem of withdrawals and failures, which included other alternatives as well as remedial courses, creating online modules, offering tutoring, mentoring, practice among small groups and others. *(Certification 2006-07-18 Administrative Board) (10.31), (Certification 2006-07-12 Academic Senate) (10.32)*

- The Dean of Academic Affairs continues to emphasize the distribution of academic offerings to make the best use of its physical facilities.
- **Outcomes:**

  - Does not exceed the size limits established for the courses.

  ![Fig. 10.2](image)

  There has been a decrease in the number of sections with an excess in the limit (more than 30 students) and an increase in sections within the limit (30 students or less). It is expected that fewer students in a section, the quality of education is better, on the other hand, sections with fewer than 20 students, shows that the distribution is not cost-effective. The university expects to achieve balance, not to exceed the limit while maintaining cost effectiveness.

- Identification of critical courses

- The data from recent years shows a decrease in the % of W and F in the Department of Mathematics and an increase in the % of grades approved (A-C) for the past academic years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Grades/Academic Years</th>
<th>Mathematics Department Grades</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Approved (A-C)</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Deficient (D)</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Not approved (W,F)</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the courses identified as critical in the Mathematics Department, there is a decrease in the percentage of non-approved grades in recent years and an increase in the percentage of approved grades (A-C). However, for the last year 2009-10, we saw again in the Mate 3172 (Pre-Calculus II), Mate 3031 (Calculus I) and Mate 3032 (Calculus II) an increase in the percentage of non-approval. For this semester there were a high percentage of withdrawals and incompletes in some courses. This merit further analysis and we should...
continue to observe the trends for the coming academic years. *(Critical Courses- Mathematics)* *(10.33)*

- Distribution of the academic offerings

The above data shows that through the studies presented, it has raised awareness about the importance of maintaining balance in the academic offerings. 50% of courses are offered Mondays and Wednesdays, 30% Tuesdays and Thursdays and 20% on Fridays. The courses are distributed evenly between morning and afternoon. The schedule of courses is distributed between 7:00 am until 5:30 p.m. However, evening and weekends courses are very limited. Action Plans are considering the development of the academic offerings during weekends and evening hours in order to promote an optimum utilization of physical facilities.
Besides institutional research reports conducted by the OPIR, the institutional assessment draws on surveys and analysis carried out by other offices and institutional committees. Through these surveys, the institution can get an insight into the feelings of the users regarding the services offered, measures student satisfaction with student services, and evaluates new processes that have been implemented. Examples of these can be seen in (Appendix 10.34).

The institution is audited by internal and external regulatory agencies to measure administrative effectiveness:

- **Office of the Comptroller of Puerto Rico** - Annual audits are performed to evaluate the effectiveness of the administrative processes, institutional management, and fiscal operations.

- **UPR Board of Trustees Assessment of Operational and Administrative Phases** - The Office of Internal Audits of the UPR-Central Administration.

- **Contracted External Audits** - External auditing companies are contracted by the UPR, example: Ernst & Young.

- **Federal Audits** – Federal agencies, such as the US Department of Education, regularly assess UPRAg in its administrative processes, including student services such as Veterans’ and Financial Aid Services.

- **UPR Board of Trustees Financial Aid Monitoring** – This board conducts assessments of all aspects related to the financial aid granted to students.

- **Others Regulatory Agencies** – Other state and federal agencies such as Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Women’s Advocate Office, Disabled Citizens’ Ombudsman Office, Office of Government Ethics, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and others make periodic assessments of the Institution’s fulfillment of agency mandatory regulations.

After this assessment, the institution develops and implements plans and strategies to improve taking into consideration the suggestions made by the auditor, and then they are submitted to the appropriate agencies. Agencies then ensure that the institution complies with the plans submitted.

**Academic Assessment**

The UPRAg has directed its efforts to develop strategies and provide resources to support faculty projects to measure learning by direct methods. The details of the activities undertaken to determine the educational effectiveness of this institution will be discussed in Chapter 11 "Student Learning Assessment."
Annual Report and Assessment of the Implementation of Strategic Plan

The Chancellor assumes personal responsibility for assessing progress toward the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. Assessment is performed by direct contact with the Deans, responsible for advancing each goal. As strategic priorities are achieved, analysis of results and sharing of information are discussed in periodic meetings with the Executive Committee. In these meetings each Dean reports their achievements and situations found up until that moment. This permits the necessary adjustments for improvement. (Presentations of the Deans)  

At the end of each academic year, the deanships: student, administrative and academic, outlines, into an annual report, the achievements for each of the activities described in their respective Plans of Action. These are harmonized and compiled into an Annual Report at the institutional level. In this report the achievements, evidence and assessments are presented for each of the units. The Annual Report facilitates the integration of information and allows us to evaluate the performance of the stated objectives in our Strategic Plan.

Our Self-Study to the Middle States is in itself a means of assessment in which both the university and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education examine the effectiveness of the institution. Our institution acts upon its own recommendations for improvement, as well as those of the Commission. At the end of the specified period in the Strategic Plan, a Comprehensive Assessment of the Implementation of Strategic Plan for the corresponding period is realized. This is the tool we use to evaluate how effective we are in achieving our goals, if we are in line towards the mission established for our institution or we deviating from it.

Planning and Budgeting Activities

Assessment at the institutional level has been built into the operational requirements of every unit of the UPRAg by virtue of the planning and reporting processes themselves. The information gathered from the annual reports and other sources is what facilitates the budgetary assignments. The degree of accomplishment determines the adequacy of the budget. The academic and administrative directors are expected to solicit and justify their operating funds, based on these results.

Although we have been working for the last couple of years with the assignment of funds to comply with the activities mentioned in our Action Plans, it was, beginning in the academic year 2008-09, that for the first time a document was presented where the Operational Budget of the unit, the Strategic Plan and Ten for the Decade are in alignment. The assigned funds were
distributed to comply with the activities set out in the Strategic Plan. Given the budget limitations priorities were set, and many of the activities mentioned in the Strategic Plan most look for external funds.

Conclusion
1. The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla through the years has established a highly structured evaluation process that gives a sense of direction to the institution. It has established a Strategic Plan to guide our steps toward achieving the goals set out therein.
2. The administration has been familiar with the Action Plans, an instrument used to give direction to their annual activities and an Annual Report that compiles the achievements.
3. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research has been disseminating data and qualitative and quantitative measures that help in the assessment of institutional effectiveness. These data are essential in the decision making process of the different deliberative bodies.
4. The institution has worked to raise awareness by the deliberative bodies about the importance of using both quantitative and qualitative measures, to make informed decisions.
5. In recent years the university system has made remarkable progress in trying to align the Systemic Strategic Plan with that of its units, offering harmony and direction to the planning process. This institution has taken a very pro-active role in this process.

Recommendations
1. In spite of all the strides made in disseminating the data, it is necessary to improve the mechanism used for compilation and validation of the achievement reached, in coordinated and systematic manner, ensuring a more active participation of all the units in the assessment process. We propose:
   - Implement the Institutional Assessment Plan (*Draft of Plan of Assessment*) *(10.36)*, it could improve the process, establishing a coordinated schedule for assessment activities and promote sharing of assessment procedures and results across organizational lines.
   - Designate a centralizing entity for institutional assessment to provide leadership for assessment, support and coordinate assessment activities to analyze, record, and disseminate results to Chancellor and to the university community. In
planning for this entity, the administration will have to take into account the financial, human, and technological resources that would be needed.

2. Given the budget constraints, awareness was raised about the importance of maintaining balance in the academic offerings and the physical facilities available. Although the courses are distributed evenly between morning and afternoon that’s not the case with the evening and weekend courses. In order to promote a better utilization of the physical facilities and in harmony with the Action Plan presented in the Monitoring Report, the institution must develop the academic offerings during the evening and weekends.
CHAPTER 11  
Assessment of Student Learning (Standard 14)

STANDARD 14: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

INTRODUCTION

The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (UPRAg) makes efforts to develop a learning assessment culture that can improve student performance. This process is reflected in goals one (1) to four (4), presented in the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 (2.2) which, in turn, are aligned to the goals of the University System, Ten for the Decade (Diez para la Década) (2.3). We view effective instruction, periodic reviews, and continual improvement as essential features towards assisting students to learn and achieve competencies that they must have at graduation time. This chapter will provide an overview of the Student Learning Assessment process, its effectiveness on student outcomes and recommendations for improvements.

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT EFFORTS

Since 1996, efforts and resources have been dedicated in developing a learning assessment culture at the institution. This process can be split in four stages that represent the improvements and experiences of the institution:


- **Second Stage:** Program Assessment. Represented in General Assessment Plan, Level II (1998). Emphasized general indicators of program quality such as demand, admission index, retention rates, graduation rates, grade distribution, employability of grads, general student satisfaction with college experience and services, etc.
○ **Third Stage:** Direct Learning Assessment. Represented in Assessment Plan, Level III (2004 – present). Emphasizes faculty led classroom assessments and other techniques to measure specific learning and skills development. Includes major and general education.

○ **Fourth Stage:** External Accountability. Professional Accreditation Initiative (2007-present). Emphasizes in the alignment of the program outcomes with professional standards. This initiative has significantly contributed to the faculty engagement on the learning assessment process, particularly on academic programs with professional accreditation (Business Administration and Education programs).

The Office of Planning and Institutional Research was commended, in the 2000 MSCHE Evaluation Team Report, for their leadership role in assisting academic programs with assessment. However, the Committee pointed out that at the departmental level assessment of learning objectives was not sufficiently developed. It recommended greater focus on learning outcome assessment and suggested a faculty-led approach. This recommendation led to the Third Stage and the Assessment Plan, Level III.

To devise a strategy, an Institutional Learning Outcome Assessment Committee was constituted and charged with the responsibility of initiating faculty-led assessment projects with the support of the Academic Affairs Dean. The main responsibility of the committee is to update the assessment plans, provide follow-up to projects, coordinate training activities, and provide guidance and mentorship to faculty. The Committee prepared guidelines for the design of course projects, and helped the professors define their teaching-learning goals, and select the assessment instrument. This committee is chaired by a faculty member chosen by the Academic Affairs Dean. In return for this task, the Chair receives release time equivalent to three-credits.

During the 2005-2008 academic years the Assessment Committee focused its efforts on course level projects. These projects were aligned to the institutional goals and program learning objectives. The committee developed proposal guides and samples, rubrics for general education skills, faculty workshops and [a website](11.1). All of these resources were available through the website. The outcome evidence of the assessment projects, developed by each academic department, will be available in the Exhibit Room.
On August, 2007, the Office of Academic Affairs published the “Plan de Avalúo de Aprendizaje Estudiantil” (Student Learning Assessment Plan), to help develop assessment plans at the program level and assist the different departments in assessing and reviewing their academic programs in armony with the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 (2.2). Goals 2, 4 and 5 presents the Faculty Development Plan component of the Strategic Plan. The process requires that each department creates an Assessment Committee, select one general education goal to monitor progress through several stages in the program, and develop the departmental plans (Departmental Assessment Plans (8.5)).

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL ASSESSMENT: GENERAL INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC QUALITY

Includes dimensions of academic assessment developed since Stage 2. This assessment was conducted by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. It emphasizes comprehensive input and output indicators of program quality such as demand, admission index, retention rates, graduation rates, grade distribution, employability of grads, general student satisfaction with college experience and services, etc. The results are published annually in the Fact Book, which is widely distributed to all college constituencies.

Faculty and Learning Assessment

Since 1996, UPRAg has been making efforts to improve faculty skills related to the learning assessment process. The empowering of the faculty contributes to the students’ academic success. Efforts and resources were first focused on the general education skills. Faculty skills have been improved in different areas through workshops, peer support, websites, materials, and technical support, among others.

Workshops (11.2) provide faculty the opportunity to enhance teaching skills and assessment techniques. These activities are focused on the development of assessment instruments, data analysis, effective reports, use of the technology in teaching and learning process, sharing results and experiences, writing measurable learning objectives, etc. The workshops are coordinated each semester by the Academic Affairs Deanship and “Centro de Tecnología Educativa en Multimedios” (CETEM). The topics are selected from faculty recommendations on workshop evaluation forms or by individual requests.
During the academic years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 the Deanship of Academic Affairs celebrated an annual Conference of Assessment where faculty members shared assessment activities results, insights, and actions that seem to promote improvement. These conferences allowed faculty and administrators to evaluate the status of their programs in relation to program goals, learning objectives, learning outcomes, and future actions.

Although efforts have been made in order to improve faculty knowledge and skills in the learning assessment process, there are still many opportunities for improvement. During the second academic semester of 2009-2010, the Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee administered a survey (11.3) \(^1\) to know the faculty’s point of view toward the learning assessment process and to identify opportunities for improvement. Close to 20% of the faculty answered the survey. Among the results, it was found that more than 62% of the faculty realized that the institution dedicates resources to improve skills and knowledge related to the learning assessment process. Nearly 80% of the faculty considered the assessment of learning as an essential element in the learning process. About 60% of the faculty pointed out that the participation on learning assessment projects has also improved their skills and knowledge on the assessment process, while 95% said that they have participated in assessment activities on their departments.

The contribution of faculty training is made evident by the increase in learning assessment projects and the use of Moodle as a support tool for courses. These results represent an achievement of our distinctive emblematic project, Multimedia Education for the 21st Century (4.22).

The Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee supports faculty development by providing guidance and mentorship. It also prepares guidelines for the design of course projects and an assessment instrument which helps the professors define the teaching-learning goals. This committee keeps the website update resources and projects.

CETEM represents a very important element in the training of faculty. This center provides technical support and workshops for the faculty(9.14) and students(11.4) \(^2\) through software and multimedia equipment management.

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\(^1\) See Appendix 11-3, Faculty Learning Assessment Survey

\(^2\) See appendix 11-4, Informe de CETEM sobre la participación de los estudiantes
GENERAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT

The empowering of the faculty in the learning assessment process contributes in the development of the general education skills. In 1996, the institution, through the Interdepartmental Assessment Committee, identified a group of general educational skills that are important for the institution. These skills have been modified throughout the years.

In August 2007, the Office of Academic Affairs published the Student Learning Assessment Plan that established the general educational skills and the process that each Academic Department should follow in order to reach those skills. The general educational skills listed are: oral and written communication; mathematics and computing, critical thinking, management and application of technology, the ability to access, manage and use information; and the ability to engage in teamwork.

Table 11.1 General Education Evaluation Schedule shows the skills monitored from academic year 2005-2006 to 2009-2010.

### Table 11.1 General Education Evaluation Schedule

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<tr>
<td>Oral and written communication</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics and computing skills</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and application of technology</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to access, manage and use information</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to engage in teamwork</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidelines for Student Learning Assessment

Figure 11-1 Departmental Learning Assessment Process shows the interactions between the Academics Department and the Academic Affairs Deanship in regards to the Learning Assessment Plan.
The result of the learning assessment process and the requirements of professional accreditation boards, contributes in the improvement of the curriculum program. The learning assessment departmental plan helps identify areas of opportunities related to specific fields. Each academic department develops a learning assessment plan that responds to the program’s goal. These departmental plans (Departmental Assessment Plans (8.5)) are focused on the knowledge and skills of particular fields, as well as in general educational skills.

**Figure 11-1: Departmental Learning Assessment Process**

Note: Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (ILOAC)
General Education Acquired Knowledge Test ("Prueba de Conocimiento Adquirido")

The general educational skills is measured through different activities: standardized tests, course and departmental projects, capstone projects, field experience evaluations, performance on licensure examinations, etc.

**Figure: 11.2 Student Learning Assessment Cycle**
In academic year 2008-2009, a General Education Acquired Knowledge Test was designed to assess the knowledge of freshmen students in the subjects of Social Sciences, Humanities, Spanish and Natural Sciences. The instrument designed consisted of 100 multiple choice items that measured general knowledge in the mentioned areas of study, and one essay exercise to measure writing communication skills in Spanish. This cohort will then be assessed during their third year of studies with the same test to determine the contributions made by the institution towards student improvement (November, 2010).

Although the final reports have not been prepared, these results are discussed among faculty members to identify strategies to improve student skills. Then, the academic departments modifies their learning assessment plans to address student needs. The test was administered once more in 2009-2010 with similar results. Other strategies were put in place (11.5)³, for example:

- Office System Department designed learning modules to improve skills in Spanish. The modules are available through in Moodle platform.
- Education and Spanish Department joint efforts to improve writing skills by means of workshops.

**Mathematics**

Another general educational skill that the institution monitors as an opportunity area is mathematics. Indicators such as the College Board Test, grades, pass and withdrawal rates (11.6)⁴ on Mathematics courses, shows remainder on math skills (11.7)⁵. Some of the strategies to improve the skills are through mentorship and, for example, enrolling the students in remedial credit courses. The Cert.No. 12-2006-07 (10.32) of the Academic Senate authorizes that students of the Business Administration Program with a score of less than 650 on the College Board will be enrolled in a remedial mathematics course. There is a petition to do the same with Natural Sciences and Electronics Departments students.

The Academic Senate required the Office of Planning and Institutional Research a report that compared the College Board Test results in mathematics with the student pass rates. Also, the Cert. No.

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³ See Appendix 11-5, Recomendaciones Departamentales a la Prueba de Conocimiento Adquirido
⁴ See Appendix 11-6, Withdrawals rates report
⁵ See Appendix 11-7, Institutional studies on Mathematical courses
18-2006-07 Academic Senate (8.19) required that the Academic Deanship and the Department of Mathematics design and develop a plan to improve course pass rates. The level of competence on general education skills determine in some degree the student performance on the academic program in which are enrolled.

**Information Skills**

Information skills are a critical element in assessment process, the teaching information skills is essential for finding, recuperating, analyzing and using information. The Library Information Competency Program establishes collaborative agreements with faculty to integrate information skills in the curriculum (See appendix 11.8 for an example, integration of Information Skills Curriculum for English 3102 on academic year 2009-2010).

The librarians created written materials, coordinated presentations with faculty members for the students, and learn about the resources available to them through the library web page. Topics incorporated library search techniques using the on-line catalog, databases, evaluating information sources of Internet, etc. The information skills are assessed with activities such: pre and post test, rubrics, research papers, quizzes, pathfinders, etc. The Information Skill Results (11.9) have been used to reinforce certain areas of information competences and offered individual help. Table 11-2 shows the quantity of students that were trained on the access, management and use of information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Quantity of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005–2006</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006–2007</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 - 2008</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 - 2009</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2,101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 – 2010</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>2,678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The faculty were very interested in participates in the Library information competences program and schedule library sessions for their classes. The librarians are committed to strengthen their efforts by working closer to the teaching faculty. Improved written materials are being prepared, faculties were
prompted to include information skills development in their course syllabus, and presentations are planned to orient the faculty and stimulate their participation.

**Academic Program Assessment**

The assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning is essential to institutional planning. The Chancellor assumes personal responsibility for assessing progress toward the goals and objectives described in the strategic plan. The new or revised strategic priorities are then adopted by the analysis of results obtained through the assessment process. Correspondingly, the institutional priorities identified, help to establish the assignments in the budget. The information is shared and discussed between the Chancellor, Budget Director and Deans.

Recent budgetary limitations notwithstanding, during the past five years assessment of student learning, program accreditation and learning technology have received special consideration. Besides regular budgetary assignments, other funds may be added during a given year through particular transfers by the UPR Central Administration or obtained through proposals for external funds. Table 11.3 shows the funds, dedicated to academic purposes only, assigned for IT technology and services and program accreditation during the past five years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Funds assigned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>$165,674.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>$165,674.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>$165,575.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>$165,575.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>$159,619.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Professional program accreditation assignments show commitment stemming from both, the campus and the Central Administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Funds Transferred-Central Administration</th>
<th>UPRAg Budget</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>$20,734.00</td>
<td>$32,993.00</td>
<td>$53,727.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>$55,081.00</td>
<td>$16,300.00</td>
<td>$71,381.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>$57,542.00</td>
<td>$26,040.00</td>
<td>$83,582.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>$61,709.00</td>
<td>$15,558.00</td>
<td>$77,267.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>$28,104.00</td>
<td>$24,993.00</td>
<td>$53,097.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although with limited budget each Academic Program kept their assessment projects as plan. An important requirement for any academic program is that it responds to the mission and goals as stated on Certification 43-2006-07 (11.10) and Certification 80-2005-06 (6.19) by Board of Trustees which present the Regulation for periodic evaluation of Academic Programs at the UPR (See also a summary of the guide in Spanish Curriculum revision in the light of the accreditation process 11.11). Those certifications also require that student learning expectations be included in the program’s graduating student profile and a program evaluation to determine if it is effectively reaching its goals and objectives. These requirements help to ensure that program learning outcomes are clearly articulated and consonant with the institution’s mission. The University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla requires that all its academic programs be comprehensively assessed and revised at least every five years and/or to be accredited by a professional Accreditation Board (NCATE, ACBSP, ABET, IACS, ACRL, etc.). The process requires evaluation of the program learning objectives and the update of all course syllabi in response to program changes.

As a result of the program evaluation the Quality Control Associate and Bachelor Degree, the Business Administration Associate Degree (11.12) and the Office System Associate Degree were discontinued.
Indirect Assessment

Evaluation of academics programs can be determined also through the student achievement through external or professional examination. For example, the institution shows compliance of the objectives in the tests administered by Puerto Rico Teacher Certification Examination (PCMAS). The Table 11-5 shows the percentage of approval of our students in the test.

Table 11-5: Teacher Examination (PCMAS) 2005-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total of candidates</th>
<th>Quantity that approve</th>
<th>Quantity that no approve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level 2005</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level 2005</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level 2006</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level 2006</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level 2007</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level 2007</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level 2008</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level 2008</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level 2009</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level 2009</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level 2010</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level 2010</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These data shows that there is an increase in the percentage of elementary level that passes from 80% in 2005 to 95% in 2010. Also, the table shows that the number of students of secondary level has been consistent dominating, reaching its highest rate in 2010 when 92% approved. In accordance with these
findings, the teacher preparation program is being effective and meets the goals and objectives of the institution and, therefore, the program.

**Capstone and Research Courses**

Another way to assess the academic program effectiveness is through capstone and research courses. Students’ supervisors provide opinions and recommendations that are to do adjustments in the courses and/or programs, mainly in the Businesses Administration (11.13), Natural Sciences, Education and Office System Departments. The Electronics Department, which is in the pipeline of for professional accreditation, adds a capstone course this semester as an elective course.

**Graduate School Admissions**

The number of students, from the Natural Sciences Department programs, accepted in graduate and professionals schools has increased during last years as founded in the results of a graduate student survey (11.14). Surveys are tools that help us to determine if the institution meets the program outcomes. Also, it can be identify the students who pursue graduate programs. In 2008, it conducted a survey among students graduating from the Bachelor of Science in Biology revealed that thirty-four percent (34%) of respondents were studying in graduate schools.

**PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION AND ITS EFFECT ON ASSESSMENT**

Professional accreditation of all programs for which such options are available is now a formal policy of the University of Puerto Rico system, Ten for the Decade, goal four (4). Accordingly, since 2006 at the UPR-Aguadilla we have been actively involved in program assessment in pursuit of accreditation. The Vice president Office of Academic Affairs supported the professional accreditation by coordinating assessment workshops, providing computers as well as money for academic substitution tasks for each program coordinator at the campuses.

As is well known, all accreditation agencies now emphasize learning as a critical part of their standards. Hence, this policy has resulted in a significant rise of attention to assessment yielding positive results for our academic programs. The process of assessment is a critical part of accreditation because it permits revisiting our concepts and perspectives to direct our strategies toward learning outcomes assessment (11.15). The assessment initiative is linked to UPRAg’s overall effort to achieve the

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6 See Appendix 11-13, Avalúo del Aprendizaje Cursos Integradores y de investigación
7 See Appendix 11-14, Estudiantes admitidos a Escuelas Graduadas
8 See appendix 11-15, Informes de avalúo de los programas acreditados
accreditation of professional programs by recognized professional organizations. It is important to mention the key measures that have been instituted by the different departments during this process of accreditation:

- Develop short and long term plans of action,
- Implement specific assessment plans for each program and department.
  - This includes the design of assessment instruments, such as questionnaires to employers and graduates, aimed at employers or supervisors; for the assessment of learning activities: development of assessments aimed at gauge the teaching and learning process and student achievement.
- Carry out personnel and faculty meetings on regular bases to specifically focus on the analysis of assessment issues and procedures so that the process leads to recommendations aimed at improvement of educational services.
- Enhance faculty teaching skills and assessment techniques:
  - Provide faculty training workshops and professional development activities in the area of assessment; and specifically focus in areas such as: effective use of the technologies of computing and communication, improving services, effective reporting, and procedural rules and ethical issues,
  - Increase the number of faculty members that hold doctoral degrees by supporting and providing assistance.

All these efforts have been successful as evidenced by the achievement of professional accreditation of the following programs:

- **The Business Administration Program (all concentrations) received the accreditation by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).**

  This program has been accredited on April, 2009. The curriculum for the Department of Business Administration has been designed to develop analysis skills, comprehension, communication research, leadership, ethics, teamwork, and technology. As part of the process the expected outcomes in the student have been aligned with the courses of Business Administration Program. The Faculty has developed diverse instruments of assessment, to measure the level of accomplishment of skills and outcomes in the indicated courses. As part of the accreditation process the Department has developed a
The formal process of assessment, therefore is one of the standards established by ACSBSP. The information obtained by this process has been used to do improvement in the curriculum, according the changing market of employment, such as courses modifications and the implementation of a formal process of assessment in different courses.

- The Education and English’s (Elementary Education and Education in English with Multimedia) achieved accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE) (11.16).

This program has been accredited on October 2010. Specifically, in compliance with the assessment standard of NCATE, the PPM-UPRAg had to document all the process of assessment, to establish precise and clear guides to direct the process since the student is selected to participate in the program, during and after graduate of the same one. Two instruments developed because of the process are: Practice Teaching Handbook (11.17) and the Assessment Manual (11.18). The unit has designed a comprehensive assessment system that articulates multiple assessments that gather and document information about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of candidates, as well as unit administrative variables in order to monitor and improve candidate performance and unit operations.

Figure 11.3 Unit Assessment system
The system integrates internal sources of information such as, grades, teaching-supervisor reports, and specific instruments designed to measure candidate’s proficiency and performance. External sources of information are also used, for example, results of state licensure exams (called PCMAS) which assess academic and professional knowledge, and employer and candidate satisfaction surveys.

The system considers varied sources of information, such as: exams, candidate portfolios, reflective journals, interviews, supervision and observation reports, candidate work samples, and results of state certification exams. The assessment data is analyzed and recommendations are developed and executed. The system focuses on the teacher candidate as the center of the educational process. The process ensures that candidates obtain appropriate career and academic counseling, and tutoring services.

- The Library achieved professional recognition by The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)

The Library has been certified on completion of the ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education on December 2007.

**Programs in the process of attaining Professional Accreditation**

The following programs are in the professional pipeline:

- **Office Systems Program**

  This program is in process of the accreditation by ACBSP for the 2011. As part of the process the department has been established a formal process of assessment, therefore is one of the standards established by the professional accreditation agency. The curriculum for the Office Systems’ Program has been designed to develop analysis skills, comprehension, communication, technology, leadership, ethics, teamwork, and research skills through course projects and in-class activities, among others. The department has developed a series of assessment activities to evaluate these skills. The information obtained by this process has been used to do improvement in the curriculum, according the changing market of employment. Some of these improvements consist in modification of existing courses, an establishment of a formal process of assessment.
• **Information Systems Bachelor Program and the Electronic Bachelor Program**

They are in an assessment stage and are to be evaluated against the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) standards.

• **Professional Student Counseling**

They are in an initial assessment stage and are to be evaluated against the Accreditation Board for The International Association of Counseling Services.

**Departmental Directors Survey and the Impact of Professional Accreditation**

During the second semester of the academic year 2009-2010, directors (11.19)\(^9\) were surveyed to identify the impact of accreditation in academic departments. Some of the most important recommendations related to the courses are:

- Emphasize in writing and oral communication skills,
- Evaluate course name and descriptions,
- Increase or modify course offerings,
- Reduce total credits of programs,
- Incorporate multimedia resources,
- Align goals and objectives with professional accreditation criteria,
- Add or improve capstone courses,
- Increase work group projects.

About 36% of the academics departments informed that they have made changes in curriculum, such as, increase course offerings and curriculum sequences.

**Course Level Assessment**

Course syllabuses must support academic program goals to achieve the outcomes. Course learning objectives are assessed through individual class-based projects. During syllabus revision, course objectives are revised to guarantee their alignment to program objectives. Learning outcomes in these courses involve assessment of learning objectives at the program or summative level.

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\(^9\) See Appendix 11-19, Encuesta a directores departamentales sobre el impacto de la acreditación
Another way to assess and enrich learning assessment at course level is through the use of technology (11.20)\textsuperscript{10}. Some of these tools are: projectors, whiteboard, internet, electronic course platform and databases (11.21)\textsuperscript{11}. The director’s survey shows that about 64% of the academic departments have submitted proposals to incorporate technology on courses. Some of the benefits of this approach are:

- Increase in virtual communication.
- Use of multimedia resources to incorporate research activities.
- Increase the availability of course resources through Moodle and the library electronic reserve and online databases.
- Provide online Moodle workshops to support courses.
- Improve assessment techniques.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the student learning assessment process and its results, we can point out the following conclusions:

- During the past five years, the institution has made a great improvement in the learning assessment process that is evidenced with the increase in learning assessment projects.
- Faculty is continuously receiving better in learning assessment tools and techniques.
- The development and implementation of the Student Learning Assessment Plan is guiding the institutional efforts to improve learning assessment process and to promote assessment culture.
- The professional accreditation process has contributed in the improvement of program curriculum and courses through its evaluation and alignment of standards or criteria.
- The use of multimedia resources has provided other strategies and tools to promote and benefit the learning assessment process.
- The Institutional Outcomes Learning Assessment Committee support learning assessment projects at all levels.
- The University assessment website page provides easy access to supporting materials or resources and learning assessment project results.

\textsuperscript{10} See Appendix 11-20, Encuesta a directores sobre el impacto de la tecnología
\textsuperscript{11} See Appendix 11-21, Moodle courses or resources
The Assessment Committee acknowledges that despite having received education and training on several assessment areas, some faculty members still face difficulties in defining and establishing evaluation and assessment activities, as well as writing measurable learning objectives.

There is a lack of continuity in the learning assessment process when the institutional learning assessment committee coordinator changes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue expanding and improving faculty development activities.
- Close the loop in the college-wide assessment of student learning process.
- Continue engaging the departments as a whole in a review of the general education skills.
- Review periodically the learning assessment plan.
- Strengthen the learning assessment process by providing human and financial resources to guarantee a continuous and updated process.