



# University of Puerto Rico at Cayey

# Self-Study Design

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April 2024



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## I. Institutional Overview

In 1966, Puerto Rico's legislature approved [Law Number 1](#) commonly known as the University of Puerto Rico Law. The law established the operational existence of the Public University and approved the establishment of regional colleges or units. This became part of a historical effort to decentralize the public university system beyond the three main Campuses (UPR Rio Piedras, UPR Mayaguez, and the Medical Sciences Campus) and, in doing so, make the public university system accessible to other regions of the island.

Soon after, in 1967, the Cayey Regional College (CRC) (University of Puerto Rico at Cayey) was established. Since its inception, the CRC was ascribed directly to the President's office while the other regional colleges (9) were structured under what became the Administration of Regional Colleges (ARC). The reason behind this unique status was the need to offer baccalaureate degrees beyond the three campuses. Soon after, on April 2, 1982, the governing body of the UPR System approved the creation of Cayey University College (CUC) thus granting the unit fiscal and administrative autonomy. Eventually, all of the regional colleges were granted their autonomy and opened their curriculum to bachelor degrees (1997) and Cayey University College became known as the University of Puerto Rico in Cayey.

The UPR Cayey provides an affordable education to students primarily from the central-southwestern geographical region of the island, (11 municipalities). A Board of Governors oversees the general functioning of the UPR system without interfering with campus governance affairs. There is a President of the UPR System. The campus's administrative structure consists of a chancellor, deans, associate deans, academic directors, and support office directors<sup>1</sup>. It has been accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) since 1975, receiving its most recent reaffirmation of accreditation on November 17, 2019.

## II. Mission Statement and Institutional Goals

First and foremost, the mission of the UPR system as established by [Law 1 1966](#), is to serve the people of Puerto Rico under the ideals of a democratic Puerto Rican society. In this spirit, the

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.upr.edu/cayey/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2023/05/organigrama-institucional-uprc-feb2023.pdf>

UPR system established campuses in key regions of the island serving specific regions. UPR Cayey has been serving the central southwestern region of the island for more than 50 years. Its mission was first approved in 1979 and subsequently revised in 1992, 2005, and 2018. The mission posits three main ideals:

- A commitment to an interdisciplinary education in the areas of the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences.
- Forming ethical citizens who are independent and critical thinkers while being socially responsible.
- Academic excellence via research, community service, and artistic creation.

The institution's strategy to reach its mission is defined through the four main goals found in its Mission and Goals statement (Academic Senate (AS) Certification 89: 2005-06, and Academic Senate (AS) Certification 15: 2018-19<sup>2</sup>) which are; 1) to provide an undergraduate education of excellence, 2) cultivate in all of the university sectors a commitment to the institution's academic project and in doing so create a sense of unity and institutional purpose, 3) make UPR Cayey one of the main academic and cultural centers in Puerto Rico, and 4) promote the development of social responsibility based on respect for our fellow human beings and our natural surrounding.

In 2018, UPR Cayey adopted a new vision statement which sets out to define UPR Cayey as an institution that serves as an educational model of intellectual and social transformation through the integration of research, artistic creation, and community.

With the change in leadership and approval of a new systemic strategic plan (UPR 120) in 2023<sup>3</sup>, the current institutional leadership is in the middle of a new strategic plan process. The Chancellor's Ad-Hoc Committee for Strategic Planning has submitted to the AS a revision of its goals and mission statement to address the more pressing matters the UPR Cayey is currently facing.

- **Key External and Internal Environmental Factors**

Over the past seven years, the island of Puerto Rico has faced several very difficult events that have challenged the UPR Cayey community. During the institution's previous Self-Study process

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.cayey.upr.edu/mision-vision-y-objetivos/#:~:text=La%20Universidad%20de%20Puerto%20Rico%20en%20Cayey%20est%C3%A1%20comprometida%20en,aut%C3%B3nomos%2C%20cr%C3%ADticos%20y%20socialmente%20responsables.>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.upr.edu/ac/plan-estrategico-upr-2023-2028/>

(2006-2016<sup>4</sup>), the island’s government declared its debt unpayable and as a consequence, the US Congress appointed a Federal Oversight and Management Board (FOMB) which was signed into law by then President *Barack Obama*. The FOMB represents the Government of Puerto Rico before its creditors.

From the outset, the FOMB stipulated that the UPR System was to develop a fiscal plan. At the same time, the FOMB made it clear that the appropriations granted to the UPR would need to be reduced by 40% over six years. To offset the significant reduction in funding, the UPR system implemented a series of measures such as raising tuition, restructuring its campus organizational/administrative structures to improve efficiency, applying a hiring freeze, and controlling expenses.

During this period, the UPR Cayey has received a 22.7 percent reduction in terms of its operational budget:

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Operational Budget</b>
2017-2018	\$36.9
2018-2019	\$33.5
2019-2020	\$31.8
2020-2021	\$30.7
2021-2022	\$33.3
2022-2023	\$27.8
2023-2024	\$ 28.5

In 2017, the island faced two major hurricanes, Hurricane Irma and Category 5 Hurricane Maria. While still recovering from the aftereffects of Hurricane Maria, a 6.4 Earthquake in the Punta Montalva southwest region of the island caused major disruptions throughout December 2019 and January 2020. The earthquake along with Hurricane Fiona (September 28, 2022), continued to cause severe damage and continued interruptions of the island’s infrastructure and services (electricity, potable water, and communications).

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.cayey.upr.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2017/03/2016-UPR-Cayey-Self-Study-MSCHE-FINAL\\_FEB21\\_2017.pdf](https://www.cayey.upr.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2017/03/2016-UPR-Cayey-Self-Study-MSCHE-FINAL_FEB21_2017.pdf)

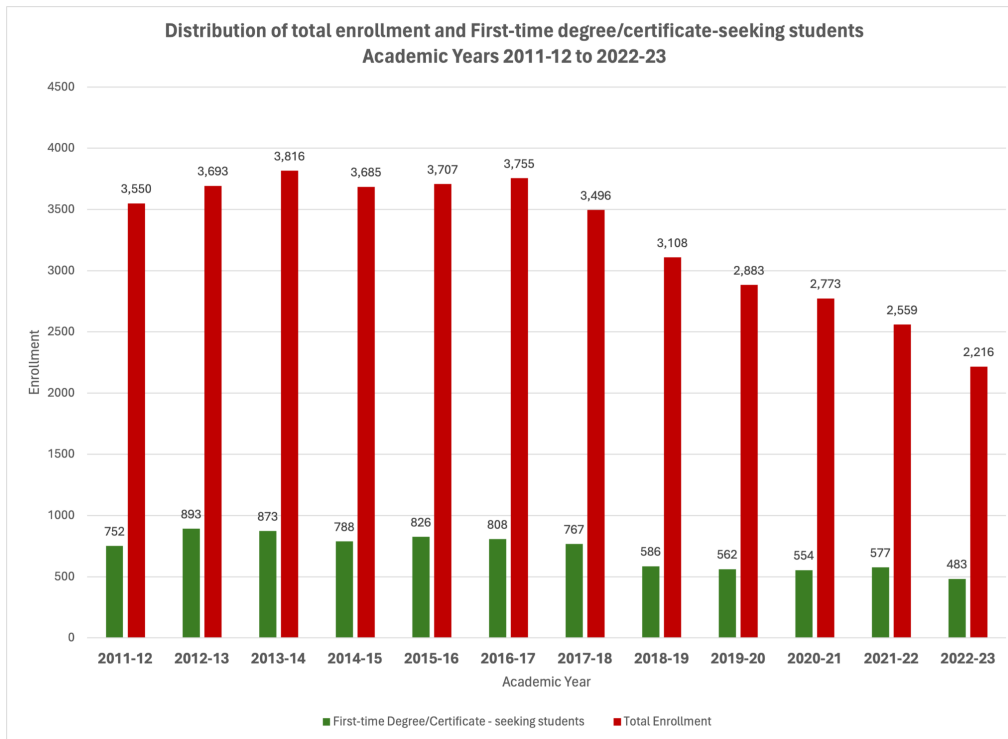
These geohazards coupled with the dire fiscal situation the island was facing, were two key factors in the immigration of hundreds of thousands to the mainland. Institutional researchers at UPR Cayey have pointed out how starting with the Great Economic Recession of 2006 (Lozada, 2018), 524 thousand Puerto Ricans had immigrated to the US. Factoring in the immigration patterns after Hurricane Maria (The Puerto Rico Statistics Institute reported a loss of 97 thousand Puerto Ricans immediately after Hurricane Maria), and the loss of population from the region of service, the demographic changes became a real challenge for UPR Cayey.

Service Region of UPR Cayey 1980-2021 (15-19 Years of Age)

Year	Population	Change in %
1980	43,542	
1990	42,171	-3.1
2000	39,488	-6.4
2010	38,087	-3.5
2016	32,861	-13.7
2021	25,488	-22.4

Source: Census Data 1980,1990, 2000,2010 and the PR-American Community Survey-2016-2021.

Enrollment trends make these challenges evident. Yet, the UPR Cayey does have strengths and strategies that are being implemented to offset the loss of enrollment. The current Strategic Plan ([UPR Cayey Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#)) has emphasized the need to expand UPR Cayey’s appeal beyond its service region.



Source: Assessment and Institutional Research Office

While the fiscal and demographic challenges are evident, other related changes have started to take place such as the consolidation of services among the different campuses. Such a move seeks administrative efficiency by consolidating services and centering them in one campus as it serves areas. This academic year UPR Cayey is partaking in such a change that has started in the areas of Finance, Student Financial Aid Offices, and the Office of Information Systems. This is the second stage of an administrative pilot project.

- **Programs of Study and Student Population**

UPR Cayey is categorized by the Carnegie Classification (2015)<sup>5</sup> as a baccalaureate college with an Arts and Sciences focus—the only unit within the UPR System possessing this classification. The institution offers 24 baccalaureate degree programs across five academic fields: Natural Sciences (5 Baccalaureate programs), Social sciences (4 baccalaureate programs) Arts (3 Baccalaureate programs), Teacher Preparation Program (9 Baccalaureate programs) and Business Administration (3 programs). In addition, UPR Cayey has 29 different minors alongside three professional certifications. It is interesting to note that 19% of our 2022-23 graduating class also graduated with minors and professional certificates.

<sup>5</sup> <https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/institution/university-of-puerto-rico-cayey/>

The quality and rigor of UPR Cayey’s academic programs and student support offices are evidenced by the accreditations of various agencies and associations. For instance, Its business programs are accredited by the ACBSP (reaffirmation 2023<sup>6</sup>) while the education program is fully accredited by the Council of Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP, 2018<sup>7</sup>). The teacher preparation programs not only possess the Standards of Professional Accreditation (SPA) but also is accredited by the Association for Childhood Education (ACEI), National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE), National Science-Teachers Association (NSTA), and Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Furthermore, The General Library is recognized by the *Association for College and Research Libraries* (ACRL<sup>8</sup>) and The Center for the Interdisciplinary Development of Students (CEDE) is accredited by the *International Association of Counseling Services* (IACS<sup>9</sup>).

UPR Cayey has been recognized for its science program. Close to 50% of our 2023 graduating class was from the sciences. Of our 2023 graduating class, 32% had been admitted to graduate school and of these 29% were entering medical school or health-related fields<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, our science programs have a history of national recognition by earning an *Excellence in Science* award from the 2011 National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates, which placed UPR Cayey among the top 41 United States baccalaureate institutions of Hispanic Science and Engineering doctorate recipients. In addition, UPR Cayey is currently ranked in the top 10 by the NSF of baccalaureate-origin institutions of Hispanic or Latino doctorate recipients in the field of physical and earth sciences.

UPR Cayey has various programs that promote access to undergraduate research experiences including the Biomedical/Biobehavioral Research Administration Development (BRAD), Innovative Programs to Enhance Research Training (IPERT), and Maintaining, Engaging, and Tracking Alumni in Science and Health Research (METAS+). While the BRAD program supports faculty in grant writing, the IPERT program supports student training by facilitating workshops and curricular material development. On the other hand, METAS+ is a comprehensive experimental approach seeking to develop instruments to measure the efficacy of educational interventions for Latino/Hispanic undergraduate students.

The 2022 fall enrollment consisted of 2,216 undergraduate students, of which 483 were first-time degree-seeking students. The student body is **100% from underrepresented groups**

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<sup>6</sup> <https://acbsp.org/members/?id=18776382>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cayey.upr.edu/caep2022/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.upr.edu/cayey/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2017/01/ACRLCertificate.pdf>

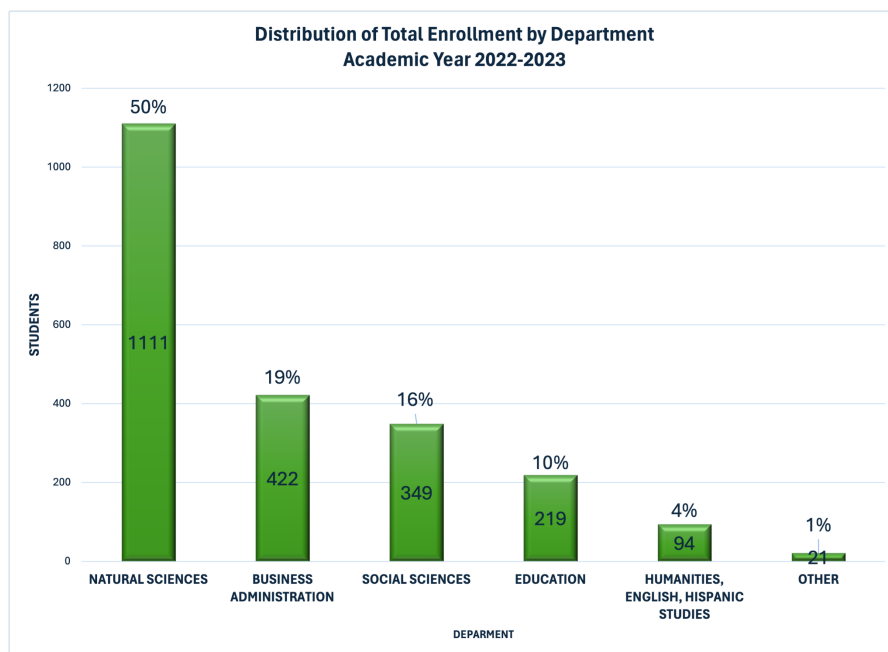
<sup>9</sup> <https://www.upr.edu/cayey/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2017/01/Certificado-de-Acreditacion-31-octubre-2016.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cayey.upr.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2024/03/bookmark-graduandos-2023-upr-cayey-1-2.pdf>

(Hispanic), **68% female and 32% male**, and approximately **38% are from disadvantaged backgrounds** (have/had no parents or legal guardians who completed a bachelor's degree and were or currently are eligible for Federal Pell grants). The institution has a retention rate of 74%. The 2016 cohort graduation rate is at 47% with the average graduation time about five years. 79% of our student body are Pell Grant recipients.

Thus, the institution provides students with opportunities that emphasize interdisciplinary education, research experiences, and community service, as a means to strengthen teaching and learning, as stated in the UPR Cayey Mission. Furthermore, since 1999, the institution has provided students with access to research training through its RISE-25 program which has been renewed under the current grant Undergraduate Research Training Initiative for Student Enhancement (U-RISE) in addition to an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant that sets out to sponsor interdisciplinary research projects and provide students from the Arts and Social Sciences with mentored research experiences. There are currently 265 students involved in externally funded research projects.

Of our 2022-23 enrollment, 50% of our student body is enrolled in the sciences.



Source: Assessment and Institutional Research Office

Students also are supported by a Title V Student Support Center known by its Spanish acronym as CAETV ([Title V Student Support Center](#)). The center provides free tutoring services (In person and online) on a broad range of subjects that include General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry, Natural Sciences Labs, Pre-Calculus, Experimental Calculus, Calculus, Mathematics, University Physics, Biology, Genetics, English, Spanish, and Business Administration.



As of Fall 2023, UPR Cayey has 113 Instructional faculty (72 tenured/tenured track) and 41 contract personnel (Full Time and Part Time.). The faculty has a strong commitment to professional development and scholarly activities to carry out the academic agenda. For the continued professional growth of its faculty, the UPR Cayey sponsors two *Professional Development Days* every academic year. To round out the composition of our university community, 277 non-instructional staff provide support to fulfill the mission and goals of our institution.

- **Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in the Self-Study**

Based on the challenges discussed above, UPR Cayey developed strategies to identify the priorities. From holding focus group meetings with student leadership to meetings with the current executive leadership, several strategies were used to obtain a clear understanding of what the priorities had to be given the challenges the institution is facing. An AD-Hoc strategic planning committee was also constituted by the Chancellor and the UPR Cayey MSCHE Steering Committee. Both of these bodies also partook in the process to determine what the Institutional Priorities for this study would be:

- 1) Fortify student retention and broaden enrollment efforts by innovating, adjusting, and communicating our academic offerings, strengthening student support services, and improving institutional infrastructure.
- 2) Revitalize institutional planning and assessment through administrative reengineering.
- 3) Strengthen our fiscal sustainability by proactively increasing external funds and promoting the search for additional funding.

Institutional Priorities	Standards
Fortify student retention and broaden enrollment efforts by innovating, adjusting, and communicating our academic offerings, strengthening student support services, and improving institutional infrastructure.	3, 4, 5, 6

Institutional Priorities	Standards
Revitalize institutional planning and assessment through administrative reengineering.	1, 2, 6,
Strengthen our fiscal sustainability by proactively increasing external funds and promoting the search for additional funding.	6, 7

These priorities were also discussed and shared with the Working Groups and with the entire university community through the UPR Cayey MSCHE web page.

**VI. Intended Outcomes of the Self Study**

The intended outcomes of the Self-Study are the following:

1. Demonstrate how UPR Cayey meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation.
2. Focus on improving and innovating in the areas identified as institutional priorities.
3. Involve the entire UPR Cayey community in a process of self-evaluation and change characterized by its inclusion and transparency and use of open strategic assessment information and activities.
4. Improve services to the entire UPR Cayey community by incorporating proven innovative practices that guarantee the quality of service and comply with the priorities outlined in the institution's mission and goals.

**VII. Self-Study Approach**

UPR Cayey will use a standards-based approach to demonstrate how the institution's mission aligns with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and the MSCHE Standards of Accreditation (14th Edition). The standards-based approach allows for a structured approach to building the self-study and sustaining the institution's assertions regarding its compliance. The fact that the Evidence Expectations are aligned with the standards allows for working groups to focus their efforts on the criteria. Furthermore, the task of involving the community in the stage of the Working Groups is further simplified by aligning the interests and expertise of the university community to the standards and criteria in question. Finally, many of our accredited programs part from a standards-based approach, and this becomes a process all too familiar with our institution.

The Working Group members by standard are:

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Members</b>
<b>Standard 1: Mission and Goals</b>	Dr. Isar Gordreau Dr. Belinda Román Prof. Gustavo Salvarrey Dr. Rosana Garafis Ms. Nissi San Antonio	<b>Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience (continued)</b>	Mr. Jesús Martínez Dr. Dalvin Méndez Dr. José A. Estrada Dr. Thayra Reyes
<b>Standard 2: Ethics and Integrity</b>	Prof. Efraín Colón Mr. Juan E. Santiago Dr. Ruth N. Mercado Mr. José E. Rosario Dra. Gladys M. Laboy	<b>Standard 5: Educational Effectiveness Assessment</b>	Dr. Carmen Berrios Dr. Xiomara Santiago Dr. Gabriel Román Dr. Patria López de Victoria Dr. María De Jesús
<b>Standard 3: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience</b>	Prof. Awilda M. Caraballo Prof. Ana Soto Dr. Héctor Isona Ms. Ana Rivera Dr. Clary Enid Ramos Dr. Wilfredo Resto Dr. Sally Delgado	<b>Standard 6: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement</b>	Ms. María M. Santiago Dr. Ángel Ortíz Ms. Enid M. Ríos Mr. Pedro Ayala Mr. Carlos E. Rosas Dr. Rosario Rivera
<b>Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience</b>	Dr. Carilú Perez Ms. Daisy Ramos Dr. Rochellie Martínez	<b>Standard 7: Governance, Leadership, and Administration</b>	Ms. Katherine I. Vázquez Ms. Rosalía Ortíz Dr. Raúl J. Castro Ms. Mara M. Nuñez

## Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee

There is a Coordination Committee consisting of the two co-chairs and a non-faculty staff. This committee is responsible for the conception, organization, and execution of the different stages of the Self-Study process. The Coordination Committee is responsible for presenting results providing work groups with the required information and or clarification of criteria and standards. They will be responsible for the Team Chair and Evaluation Team visits and will ultimately support the Chancellor on the Institutional Response Report. In sum, the Coordination Committee will oversee the timetable compliance and coordinate all public and internal meetings as planned or required.

### Coordination Committee

Member	Title
Dr. Mario Medina, Co-Chair and ALO	Full Professor, English Department
Ms. Olga Sierra, Co-Chair	Director of the Assessment Office
Ms. Jessica Rosario, Executive Assistant	Human Resource Office

### Steering Committee

Member	Title
Dr. Mario Medina Cabán, PhD-Co-Chair	Full Professor, English Department, ALO
Ms. Olga Sierra, Assessment Office Director &Co-Chair	Director of Assessment and Institutional Research Office
Prof. Fernando Vázquez Calle, Assessment Office	Auxiliary Researcher, Assessment and Institutional Research Office
Dr. Raúl Castro Santiago, PhD, Chemistry Department	Full Professor, Chemistry Department
Dr. Juan Caraballo Resto, PhD, Social Science Department	Associate Professor, Social Sciences Department

Member	Title
Prof. Vionex Marti, Director Institute of Interdisciplinary Research	Director of the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research
Ms. Jessica Rosario Rivera	Human Resources Office
Mr. Heberto Falcón Cruz	Student Council, Social Sciences Department

**Steering Committee Responsibilities**

The Steering Committee is charged with guiding the seven working groups managing the different standards about the self-study process. The responsibilities of the Steering Committee include:

1. Developing Self-Study Design.
2. Establish and approve the working group's charges.
3. Revising templates and documents for the working groups and revising the provided evidence.
4. Attend Working Group meetings each SC member is charged to oversee.
5. Supervise the completion of the Self-Study Report
6. Inform the institution’s deliberative bodies and university community about the self-study process.

**Working Groups Charges**

Each Working Group was presented with the charges that would guide their work.

Each working group will review the University Documents that align with the MSCHE Evidence Expectations to determine the extent to which UPR Cayey meets the MSCHE Standard of Accreditation and how the University operations align with the UPR Cayey 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. Each working group (WG) will have a chair or co-chair responsible for coordinating the working group, submitting drafts or reports, reporting to the Steering committee, and working with the co-chairs of the Steering Committee. This will help provide effective communication across the different working groups. It is expected that the co-chairs will represent their group to the campus community when necessary.

The main aim is that the criteria are analyzed and accounted for. Each member needs to provide the analysis and record said analysis in an annotated outline where the results and evidence can

be clearly and logically traced. The working group can elaborate the analysis in the language they feel most comfortable using, which can adequately express the WG’s findings.

It is recommended that the WG structure the group by responsibilities:

1. Chair or Co-Chairs: will call and facilitate group meetings
2. Evidence Manager: will help identify Each Standard and criteria
3. Writer/Translator: will aid in the translation and elaborate an annotated outline of WG analysis and findings

A checklist based on the MSCHE’s Evidence Expectations of each standard will be provided to help the group address and search the documentation required to complete the group's analysis as they address the lines of inquiry. The working group should be interpretive and analytical in its approach to comparing the documentation and provided data to the MSCHE standards. Furthermore, the conclusions from the documentation analysis process need to be formulated into recommendations that will help the current institutional leadership assess, modify, and implement the current goals, plans, and practices.

Each Working Group is required to follow the guidelines below:

- Meet 3 times a semester and/ or as needed.
- Document, Collect, and review the evidence meeting the Work Group’s assigned MSCHE.
- Submit the Evidence Expectations Worksheets and annotated outlines to the Steering Committee co-chairs once per semester of each year leading up to the Self-Study.

### **Guidelines for Reporting**

The UPR Cayey MSCHE Steering Committee agreed to the use of the following outline for each of the individual Working Group Reports. The Working Groups were instructed to use an “annotated” outline given the 100-page limitation of the Self-Study report itself. The guideline helps provide a uniform approach to each working group and allows for a structured alignment of the standard, criteria, and evidence expectation as the Working Group then analyzes its findings. A guide for the analysis and findings is also discussed below:

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### **SAMPLE TEMPLATE**

#### **Institutional Priority Focus**

Each WG should spotlight how UPR Cayey meets the MSCHE Standard in the context of the Institutional priorities:

1. Fortify student retention and broaden enrollment efforts by innovating, adjusting, and communicating our academic offerings, strengthening student support services, and improving institutional infrastructure.
2. Revitalize institutional planning and assessment through administrative reengineering.
3. Strengthen our fiscal sustainability by proactively increasing external funds and promoting the search for additional funding.

#### **Guidance for Working Group 4**

Working Group 4 will focus on evaluating **Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience**, which reads as follows:

*Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success*

The Working Group should focus its analysis on providing evidence

- Clearly stated policies, processes and programs to admit, retain, and facilitate the success of all students
- Processes designed to enhance the successful achievement of students' educational goals.
- Improvement of key indicators of student success, including retention and graduation rates
- Sufficient qualified professionals to provide effective support systems
- Policies and/or procedures used to ensure student identity verification in distance or correspondence education
- Equitable policies to address the acceptance of credits and other alternative learning experiences
- Published information regarding student achievement, including student outcome measures
- Safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information
- Athletic, student life, and other extracurricular activities that are regulated by the same principles and procedures that govern all other programs

- Adequate and appropriate review and approval of student support services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party vendors
- The periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student support programs and experiences

During and after the evidence evaluation process, the working group should consider the following questions or lines of inquiry:

- What services and initiatives are offered to UPR Cayey students to sustain enrollment? How effective have they been?
- What are the KPI's that indicate student success, taking into consideration retention and graduation rates? Is there a need to update retention practices given the current fiscal situation?
- What are the current institutional recruitment and admissions practices? How do they consider students' interests, abilities, experiences, and goals? Are these practices congruent with UPR Cayey's mission and educational offerings?
- How does the institution commit to student retention, persistence, completion, and success? Are the retention practices coherent and effective part of a student-based support system?
- What academic and extracurricular experiences does the institution offer students that contribute to their professional academic experience and student success?
- What evaluations are conducted that demonstrate the effectiveness of students' support services

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**After this section, we then request groups to analyze and annotate their findings.**

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### **Working Group Analysis and Findings**

In this section, the groups will use the following outline structure to help organize the findings and group analysis. You will find that the form first states the criteria being examined and researched. Then, the provided outline structure will help the group provide an analysis that includes the criteria addressed, the policy or policies that help address the criteria and institutional and/or system procedures in place, and so on. By following this proposed structure, the WG can provide a complete analysis of how the institution meets the criteria. Simply follow each point of the outline under each of the MSCHE criteria for the standard.

### **Criteria**



1) *Clearly stated, ethical policies, practices, and processes to recruit, admit, retain, and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with the institutional mission, including:*

*a. accurate and comprehensive information regarding expenses, financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, repayment, and refunds;*

*Insert Annotations Here*

- A. CRITERIA-Restate the Criteria using the following beginning
  - UPR Cayey meets the criteria of (restate the criteria)
- B. POLICY-State the policy that address the criteria
  - The policy that serves as a basis and guide action with regard to this Criteria is (state the policy).
- C. PROCEDURE- State the procedure that addresses the criteria.
  - The procedure that the institution has in place to accomplish the related policy for this criterion is (state the procedure)
- D. STRUCTURE-State the structure (s) (For example, University/Unit/department/program, etc) tat implement the policy
  - The units/divisions/individuals who have assigned responsibility to ensure the successful implementation of the procedures for this criterion are (State the units.divisions/individuals)
- E. EVIDENCE-State 3-5 examples of evidence of the policy/procedure in action
  - Examples of evidence of the procedures in action that meet this criterion include (state 3 to 5 examples)
- F. ANALYSIS-Provide analysis on the existing policies, procedures, structures, and evidence
  - Examples include: Is this policy appropriate? When was this policy last reviewed? Is it the right policy? Is it the right structure? Is it working? To what extent do people know about the policy?
- G. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES-Provide analysis of assigned strategic priorities
  - Examples include: Which criteria does this strategic priority address? Is it working? To what extent is the University achieving the strategic priorities related to this standard

*b. a process by which students who are not adequately prepared for study at the level for which they have been admitted are identified, placed, and supported in attaining appropriate educational outcomes;*

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

*c. orientation, advisement, and counseling programs to enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience;*

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

*d. processes designed to enhance student achievement including certificate and degree completion, transfer to other institutions, and post-completion placement;*

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

*e. processes to disaggregate and analyze student achievement data to inform and implement strategies that improve outcomes for all student populations;*

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

2) Fair and transparent policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits, credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning, competency- based assessment, and other alternative learning approaches;

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

3) Policies and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records;

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

4) If offered, athletic, student life, and other extracurricular activities that are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and procedures that govern all other programs;

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

5) If applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of student support services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers.

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

6) Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student support services for all student populations with appropriate metrics and evaluation

- INSERT ANNOTATIONS HERE (USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE)

## **Working Group Conclusions**

Strengths-**Based on Working Group findings and discussions**

Challenges-**Based on Working Group findings and discussions**

Opportunities-**Based on Working Group findings and discussions**

Threats-**Based on Working Group findings and discussions**

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **VIII. Organization of the Final Self-Study Report**

The Final Self-Study Report will include the following sections:

1. An Executive Summary featuring a brief description of significant findings and opportunities for improvement and innovation identified in the self-study.
2. An Introduction presenting the Institution's history, profile, and significant developments within our Institution; a brief discussion of processes used to choose its institutional priorities; a description of the approach the Institution has chosen for self-study; and a paragraph describing how the organization of the document and how the Evidence Expectation Inventory is used.
3. Each of the standards will be addressed using the individual reports described in the above-mentioned format and include:
  - a. A heading indicating the Standard or priority under consideration
  - b. Cross-references to relevant materials in other parts of the report and within the Evidence Inventory
  - c. Analytically based inquiry and reflection
  - d. Conclusions, including strengths and challenges, with references to appropriate Criteria
  - e. Opportunities for ongoing institutional improvement and innovation
4. The Conclusion will summarize how the Institution complies with the Standards and where there is a recommended need for continued improvements. The Conclusion will outline initial plans for the institutional initiatives that will address opportunities and observations on how this process will be used to continuously improve the Institution's mission and goals, strategic planning, and operations.

## **IX. Self-Study Timeline**

<b>I. Early Preparation</b>	
September 28 2023	Self-Study Institute (SSI) meeting
October 5 2023	Self-Study Institute (SSI) meeting
October 12 2023	Self-Study Institute (SSI) meeting
October 19 2023	Self-Study Institute (SSI) meeting
October 26 2023	Self-Study Institute (SSI) meeting
December 3-7 2023	MSCHE 2023 Annual Conference
December 12 2023	Virtual Meeting with VP MSCHE

<b>II. Self-Study Design-Organizational Phase</b>	
January 12 2024	MSCHE Steering Committee meeting
January 18 2024	UPR Cayey – MSCHE Webpage Project
January 19 2024	MSCHE Steering Committee meeting
February 2 2024	MSCHE Steering Committee meeting-Working Groups members selected and named
February 8 2024	MSCHE Self-study presentation at faculty meeting
February 13 2024	MSCHE Steering Committee meeting-Institutional Priorities
February 15 2024	MSCHE Steering Committee meeting/Executive Leadership-Institutional Priorities
February 23 2024	Working Groups Workshop

<b>III. Self-Study Design-Organizational Phase (continued)</b>	
February 28 2024	Self-Study Design Draft
March 2024	1st Meeting of Working Groups
March 7 2024	Presentation: Revisión de una década en la Educación Postsecundaria en Puerto Rico
March 15 2024	Self-Study Design Draft Approval by Steering Committee
March 2024	Draft of Self-Study Design submitted to MSCHE
April 2024	2nd Meeting-Working Groups
April 9 2024	VP Visit to Institution
April 18 2024	Steering Committee Meeting
May 2024	3rd Meeting-Working Groups
May 13-17 2024	Steering Committee and Working Group Discussion of Findings, SWOT analysis and Recommendations
June 2024	Revisions and acceptance of Self Study Design

<b>IV. Data Analysis Self-Study Draft</b>	
August-December 2024	Self-Study Drafted and shared with Community
October-November 2024	Self-Study Evaluation Team Chair chosen Visit Date chosen Accepted SSD sent to Chair
January-May-2025	Revisions to Self-Study

<b>V. Self-Study Submission to MSCHE</b>	
August 2025	Draft is sent to Chair
October 2025	Preliminary Visit from Chair
November 2025	Draft Revised based on Chair Feedback

<b>VI. MSCHE Visitation Team and Institutional Response</b>	
December 2025	Final version Self-Study Report uploaded to MSCHE Portal
January-April 2026	Site visit
June 2026	MSCHE action informed

## **X. Communication Plan**

The Communication Plan will consist of a variety of electronic spaces that will serve particular purposes and populations. The plan's aim is to keep all community members and stakeholder abreast of the accreditation activities. UPR Cayey's communication includes:

- 1) A web page ([2025-2026 Self-Study Report UPR Cayey](#)) has been designed and will serve as the main informative portal. This page is designed for external and internal stakeholders. The page will contain the organizational information as to Steering Committee members and Working Groups. The page will include relevant sources for the working groups which will provide immediate access to Systemic and Institutional DataBases that access policies and procedures that are approved by the Board of

Governors and the UPR Cayey Academic Senate. Aside from access to the Self-Study Design and other important accreditation related information, the community also has a means of contacting each steering committee member and the MSCHE steering committee at its institutional email, [msche.cayey@upr.edu](mailto:msche.cayey@upr.edu), an institutional email created for all communications to the community.

- 2) Microsoft Teams is used to store the required evidence for all of the Working Groups. It also serves for virtual meetings. There are main Teams with each Working Group on a different channel. Nevertheless, there is a shared documentation center, facilitating information that can be used depending on the topic and criteria.
- 3) The MSCHE chairs are to provide a monthly report shared with the Academic Senate and is readily available on the web page.
- 4) Kick-Off activities are to be held with specific community groups. The kick-off activities start with a community message from the Chancellor announcing the self-study process. Kick-Off activities include presentations and town hall meetings with the student council and student assembly, general faculty meetings, and non-teaching personnel.
- 5) Focus Groups as well as public hearings will be held once the Self-Study Report has been made public.
- 6) Social media is a key part of the communication strategy as well. Major MSCHE activities and informative reels are planned to keep the community up-to date and inform in a short, relevant, and relatable manner the community and stakeholder.

The Steering Committee finds that using “traditional” communicative means such as email, meetings and presentations alongside the more “non-traditional forms such as social media and reels, a healthy balance is reached and a broader audience is reached.

This communication plan will be scheduled as follows:

Communication Strategy	Target Date
Web Page and Social Media strategy	January 2024
Self-Study status report in Academic Senate meeting	Monthly
Self-Study status report in faculty meeting:	Once per semester
Self-Study draft revision sent to the community:	January 2025
Public hearings and focus groups to get community feedback:	February-March 2025
Publish the final version of the Self-Study Report:	December 2025
Promote Self-Study Visit:	January – April 2026

## **XI. Evaluation Team Profile**

To facilitate the organization of an Evaluation team we recommend the following:

### **Team Chair**

- Chief Academic Officer-Chancellor-Vice Provost
- Experience with public university systems
- Experience with UPR Cayey’s institutional priorities
- Experience with diverse student populations (Latinos, Hispanics, variety of social classes, rural and urban habitans, public and private schools’ graduates)
- Bilingual English/Spanish

### **Peer Evaluators**

- Professors from comparable academic programs
- Professors from primarily teaching/undergrad research institutions
- Expertise/experience in student affairs
- Expertise/experience in academic affairs



- Expertise/experience with faculty
- Expertise/experience with financial areas
- Expertise/experience with professional program accreditation
- Knowledgeable in commuter and public universities
- Bilingual English/Spanish

### **Comparable Peers**

- Texas State University
- University of Pennsylvania
- Bronx Community College
- CUNY Queens College
- La Roche College
- Trinity University
- Louisiana State University
- Delaware State University
- SUNY College of Technology at Canton

### **UPR Cayey Institutional Profile – (2022-2023)**

- Faculty: 109
- Undergraduate retention rate: 74%
- Non-faculty personnel: 274
- Freshmen enrollment: 483
- Undergraduate graduation rate: 47%
- Total Enrollment: 2,216
- Degrees Conferred 2021-2022: 346

## **XII. Evidence Inventory Strategy**

UPR Cayey’s MSCHE Steering Committee, with the use of Microsoft Teams, will arrange existing and researched documentation gathered for the self-study in a well-organized and referenced repository of documents by Standard, Criterion, and Requirement of Affiliation. Each Working Group has been instructed to define the strategies to complete and populate the Evidence by Standard and Criteria using the Evidence Expectations Document as a guideline. For this purpose, The UPR Cayey MSCHE Steering Committee created an Evidence Inventory Worksheet that helps facilitate the documentation required and follow the structure of evidence as aligned to MSCHE standards and criteria. Each working group will have as part of the team an administrative support that will supply the documentation process as well as the Steering Committee.

By means of the devised Evidence Worksheet (sample found below), the evidence will help evaluate the process, procedures and offices or people involved regarding each criteria and explain these to institutional community members, the Evaluation Team, and Commissioners.

The main document repository will help the Self-Study Steering Committee and Working Groups organize data and information to evidence the assertions made in their Working Group reports and the Self-Study Report.

The UPR Cayey Evidence Inventory will be developed in steps while preparing the Working-Group reports and the final Self Study.

**Step 1.** Collection of initial evidence: Using the Evidence Worksheet for each standard, Working Groups will document and determine information that is adequate and appropriate for initiating the preparation of their annotated outlines. The steering committee has devised an online form to manage any request for information a group may need and in this way keep track of what is requested and cross reference said petitions to standard and criteria in the Evidence Inventory. The form has been placed in each Working Group Channel in Microsoft Teams.

**Step 2.** Refine the documentation and reference the evidence: Discuss and decide which documentation is highly relevant, eliminate duplicate documents (several Working Groups will likely reference the same document), and, if possible, summarize lengthy processes and procedures using charts and outlines. The Steering Committee and Working Groups will continue to refine the Evidence Inventory to ensure that the information provided is representative of the Institution and comprehensive enough to enable evaluator access to meaningful information.

**Step 3.** Use the Evidence Inventory in the Self-Study preparation: The Steering Committee and the Working Groups will discuss the effectiveness of the Evidence Inventory platform for referencing in their final reports and make any necessary adjustments; for example, if the Steering Committee considers it problematic to provide appropriate documentation, it may want to consider providing the information within the Self-Study Report itself.

**Step 4.** Once all three steps are taken, the Steering Committee will proceed to upload the reports and Evidence Inventory as required by MSCHE.

# SAMPLE EVIDENCE WORKSHEET

## Evidence Guide Worksheet

To help the WG manage the evidence expected by MSCHE, we have prepared the following worksheet. Here you will find the MSCHE criteria being examined, the evidence MSCHE requires from the institution, and an empty column where the WG will place the documents, policies, and procedures related to the MSCHE criteria.

Criteria	Evidence Required by Standard (MSCHE)	Evidence Required by Standard (MSCHE); (Translation)	UPR Cayey's Documents, Processes, and Procedures
<p>1) Institutional and unit goals that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational charts for institution and all divisions and units</li> <li>Organization charts for senate, councils, and committees</li> <li>Division/ unit goals and objectives</li> <li>Summaries or cross-walks of division/unit goals and objectives with key assessment results</li> <li>Documentation of an implemented, systematic, and sustained institutional assessment process linking the assessment and evaluation process to budgeting, planning and resource allocation</li> <li>Documentation of planning and assessment processes used to make improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organigramas para la institución y todas las divisiones y unidades.</li> <li>Organigramas del senado, consejos y comités.</li> <li>Metas y objetivos de división/unidad</li> <li>Resúmenes o cruces de objetivos de división/unidad y objetivos con resultados clave de la evaluación</li> <li>Documentación de un proceso de evaluación institucional implementado, sistemático y sostenido que vincule el proceso de evaluación con la presupuestación, la planificación y la asignación de recursos.</li> <li>Documentación de los procesos de planificación y evaluación utilizados para realizar mejoras.</li> </ul>	<p>Policy:  <a href="#">Appendix EE- Plan de Avalúo Institucional</a>  <a href="#">Appendix X-Medidas-Cautelares</a></p> <p>Procedure:  <a href="#">Appendix V -Timetable-for-the-UPR-Cayey-budget-process</a>  <a href="#">Appendix S-Certification-14-2013-2014-AB-Reports-Alignment-Budget-2013-2014</a>  <a href="#">Appendix T- Operacionalización 10x10 18 Esferas JUNE2013-3-1.xlsx</a>  <a href="#">Appendix U-Certification-100-2005-2006-UPR-Cayey-Budget-Allocations</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 6.4- Características demograficas, socioeconomicas y de vivienda de la region de la Universidad de Puerto Rico</a>  <a href="#">Appendix Y-Cert-24-2015-16-SA-1-RECLUTAMIENTO</a></p> <p>Evidence:  <a href="#">Exhibit 1.31-MEMORANDO DE ENTENDIMIENTO Y PROPOSITO ENTRE LA UPR Y EL MUNICIPIO DE CAYEY</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 1.32-ACUERDO DE COLABORACIÓN ENTRE LA UPR EN CAYEY Y EL MUNICIPIO DE CAYEY PARA EL DESARROLLO DEL SISTEMA DE CANCHAS DE BALOMPIE DE LA UPR-CAYEY</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 1.34-GREEN CAMPUS: PROGRAMA DE RECICLAJE</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 1.35-MERCADO AGRICOLA Y ARTESANAL</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 1.38-DOCUMENTOS NECESARIOS PARA PROCESAR NOMBRAMIENTOS Y CONTRATOS DE SERVICIOS</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 3.2-PLAN DE MEJORAS PERMANENTES A CINCO AÑOS (2007-2012)</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit 3.3-Propuesta para el Aumento en las Tasas de Acceso, Retención y Graduación en la Universidad de Puerto Rico</a>  <a href="#">Appendix R- Financial Statements and OMB Circular A-133 Report on Federal Financial Assitance Programs</a></p>

Self-Study Design\_Draft  
 March 29, 2024