

Public Disclosure Statement

UPR - Bayamon

June 24, 2010

By the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

This statement has been developed for use in responding to public inquiries, consistent with the Commission's policy on *Public Communication in the Accrediting Process*. It should be read in conjunction with the *Statement of Accreditation Status* for UPR-Bayamon, a copy of which is attached.

UPR-Bayamon, located in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, is a unit of the University of Puerto Rico. It has been accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education since 1960. UPR-Bayamon is a public institution offering programs leading to the Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. A summary of the most recent Commission actions relative to the institution's accreditation follows.

Current Accreditation Status

On June 24, 2010, the Commission acted to place UPR-Bayamon on probation because of a lack of evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance) and Standard 11 (Educational Offerings). The full text of the Commission's action is provided below. The full text of the Commission's standards is available online at http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06_Aug08REVMarch09.pdf

UPR-Bayamon remains accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education while on probation.

The Commission places an institution on Probation when, in the Commission's judgment, the institution is not in compliance with one or more Commission standards and that the non-compliance is sufficiently serious, extensive, or acute that it raises concerns about one or more of the following: the adequacy of the education provided by the institution; the institution's capacity to make appropriate improvements in a timely fashion; or the institution's capacity to sustain itself in the long term. Probation is often, but need not always be, preceded by an action of Warning or Postponement. For details on the Commission's complete range of actions, read the MSCHÉ policy on [Range of Commission Actions on Accreditation](#). A follow-up report, called a monitoring report, is required to demonstrate that the institution has made appropriate improvements to bring itself into compliance. A small team visit also is conducted to verify institutional status and progress.

Summary of Recent Commission Actions

The University of Puerto Rico System (UPR), the principle public system for the Commonwealth, consists of eleven campuses, each holding separate accreditation. On April 21,

the students at one campus of the University of Puerto Rico system declared a 48-hour strike, protesting actions taken by the UPR system central administration and closed down the gates of the campus. Students at other campuses, including, UPR - Bayamon, voted to join the strike and closed ten of the eleven campuses of the UPR system. On May 17, 2010, Commission staff met with senior University system officials and board members concerning the ongoing strike. At the time, the University system agreed to provide a voluntary report, received by the Commission on June 1, 2010, responding to the Commission's concerns regarding compliance with:

1. **Requirement of Affiliation 3:** that requires the institution to be operational, with students actively pursuing their degree programs.
2. **Standard 3, Resources:** that requires the availability and accessibility of the necessary resources to achieve the institution's mission and goals.
3. **Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance):** that requires a system of governance that clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision making, with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the institution's mission.
4. **Standard 11:** to provide the appropriate program length required for the granting of credits and degrees.

The report was received and reviewed by the Commission. On June 21, 2010 the Commission was informed that the students and central administration offices had reached an agreement and campuses would reopen administratively, with classes resuming in July in order to allow the campuses to complete the spring semester.

On June 24, 2010 the Middle States Commission on Higher Education acted as follows:

To note receipt of the voluntary information report. To place the institution on probation because of a lack of evidence that the institution is in compliance with Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance) and Standard 11 (Educational Offerings). To request a monitoring report due by September 1, 2010, documenting evidence that the institution has achieved and can sustain ongoing compliance with (1) Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance), including but not limited to the development and implementation of clear institutional policies specifying the respective authority of the different governance bodies and their respective roles and responsibilities in shared governance; and (2) Standard 11 (Educational Offerings), including but not limited to a plan for assuring the rigor, continuity, and length of courses affected by the institution's closure. In addition, the report should document evidence of the development and/or implementation of a long-term financial plan, including steps taken to improve the institution's finances and the development of alternative funding sources (Standard 3). An on-site evaluation will follow submission of the report. The purpose of the on-site evaluation is to verify the information provided in the monitoring report and the institution's ongoing and sustainable compliance with the Commission's accreditation standards. To further direct a prompt Commission liaison guidance visit to discuss the Commission's expectations for reporting. To note that the institution remains accredited while on probation. To note that the next evaluation visit is still scheduled for 2010-2011.

Current Status and Expected Activities

UPR-Bayamon remains accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education while on probation.

Following submission of a monitoring report on September 1, 2010, the Commission will conduct an on-site visit to assess the institution's compliance with the Commission's standards. Following the on-site visit, a report by the visiting team will be completed. The monitoring report, the on-site visit report and the institutional response to the on-site visit report will be considered by the Committee on Follow-Up Activities, and then by the Commission at its November 2010 meeting.

At its November 2010 session, the Commission will take further action, in accordance with the Commission's policy, *Range of Commission Actions on Accreditation* (available at <http://www.msche.org/documents/P2.3-RangeofActions.doc>). If, based on the monitoring report and on-site visit report, the Commission determines that UPR-Bayamon has made appropriate progress in addressing the cited concerns, the Commission may act to remove the probation and reaffirm accreditation. If the Commission determines that progress sufficient to demonstrate compliance with its accreditation standards has not been made, the Commission may take further action as allowed under the *Range of Commission Actions on Accreditation*.

For More Information

The following resources provide additional information that may be helpful in understanding the Commission's actions and UPR-Bayamon's accreditation status:

Statement of Accreditation Status for UPR-Bayamon (http://www.msche.org/institutions_directory.asp) provides factual information about UPR-Bayamon and the full text of the Commission's recent actions regarding the institution.

Characteristics of Excellence (http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06_Aug08REVMarch09.pdf) provides the Commission's accreditation standards and requirements for affiliation.

Media Backgrounder (<http://msche.org/documents/Media-Backgrounder-2010.doc>) answers questions about accreditation such as "What is accreditation?" and "What is the Middle States Commission on Higher Education?"

Informing the Public about Accreditation (www.chea.org/public_info/index.asp), published by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, provides additional information on the nature and value of accreditation.

Public Communication in the Accrediting Process (www.msche.org/documents/P4.1-PublicCommunication.doc) explains what information the Commission makes public regarding its member institutions and what information remains confidential.

Range of Commission Actions on Accreditation(www.msche.org/documents/P2.3-RangeofActions.doc) and *Standardized Language for Commission Actions on Accreditation* (www.msche.org/documents/P2.4-StandardizedLanguage_031308.doc) explain the terms used in the Commission's actions.