



INSTITUTIONAL RESILIENCE IN PUERTO RICO:

A FIRST LOOK AT EFFORTS BY PUERTO RICAN HSI's



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AUTHORS:

Deborah Santiago, *Chief Executive Officer*

Emily Labandera, *Director of Research*

Cassandra Arroyo, *Research Fellow*

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For more information about this publication, contact: contact@edexcelencia.org

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FOREWORD

Imagine doing research to understand an issue and excluding the second largest group in a community. This happens regularly when considering Latinos in the U.S. Puerto Ricans are the second largest Hispanic population in the U.S. (after those of Mexican decent). Further, they are all U.S. citizens, and the colleges and universities in Puerto Rico are all U.S. institutions, and both are part of the U.S. economy. *Excelencia* in Education has always included Puerto Rico, their students, and institutions in our analysis, programming, and advocacy when we examine issues and opportunities to more intentionally serve Latino students.

This brief is about Puerto Rican HSIs, but also about institutional resilience for post-traditional institutions working to serve post-traditional students in a post-traditional time where the status quo and previous traditional efforts are no longer as effective. And in this work, despite significant differences, we have also found similarities in the challenges and opportunities in Puerto Rican communities to those in rural communities across the continental U.S. Among these similarities are substantial out-migration of young and educated residents, limited infrastructure and resources for effectively serving their community, restricted workforce opportunities, and a preponderance of both institutions and students that are economically vulnerable. Given these challenges, *Excelencia* is grateful the Ascendium Education Group was willing to support our initial project to increase understanding of institutional resilience in Puerto Rico.

Why do institutions serving students with the greatest needs and the potential of benefiting from higher education have to be so resilient? These institutions have to remain flexible and adaptable to unforeseen situations, such as a global pandemic and natural disasters, and both external and internal demands with limited resources while maintaining commitment to mission and creating a “new normal” in serving their students. We also know systems, structures, and supports in higher education are ever-evolving, and can be especially challenging for the many institutions with limited resources serving Latino and other low-income and first-generation students. This is not easy, not for institutions nor for faculty, staff, and students, who each confront these issues as individuals, as well as a collective at the institution.

Excelencia is grateful for the *confianza*, the trust, the institutional leaders had in us to share their efforts in creating a “new normal” to continue serving their students during challenging times. And their work is not done. The five institutions we listened to and learned from are still experiencing challenges that continue to redefine and reframe their strategies to fulfill their mission to their students and community.

This work would not be possible without Margarita Benítez and Hilda Colón, two dynamic, well respected, and knowledgeable higher education leaders who know Puerto Rico well and generously shared their expertise, provided connections with institutional representatives, and guided our understanding of context and complexities.

This brief provides a story of higher education trendsetters working away from the limelight; often ignored by funders, decisionmakers, employers, and higher education in the continental U.S. The overview of strategies and efforts at the Puerto Rican HSIs in this brief is intended to expose policy and decisionmakers to the leadership of a subset of critical institutions addressing difficult issues that institutions in the continental U.S. are increasingly confronting. There are experiences and strategies at these HSIs that other institutions may learn from and *Excelencia* will continue to bring attention to their important work. Considering the leadership role of Puerto Rican HSIs in higher education is overdue.

Deborah A. Santiago
CEO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Resilient institutions have an intense commitment to their mission that inspires them to successfully adapt to challenges and create a “new normal.” As colleges and universities across the U.S. continue facing enrollment inconsistencies, demographic shifts, evolving expectations, questions of value, and constraints on their financial support structure, their resilience can determine their sustainability.

Over the last five years (2017-2022), colleges and universities in Puerto Rico have faced a convergence of challenges that have tested their spirit, structure, and sustainability. They have shown resilience through catastrophic natural disasters, significant fiscal austerity, large demographic shifts, unexpected governance/leadership changes, and an unpredictable and ongoing health pandemic. While these challenges are not new or unique to Puerto Rico, their intersection during a relatively short period of time created a nexus that requires tenacity, commitment, flexibility, innovation, and adjustment.

Despite their significant efforts, there is scant attention to Puerto Rican institutions in national higher education policy discussions. This brief provides an overview of efforts to create a “new normal” by Puerto Rican Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) that can inform strategies by other institutions as they confront their own challenges.

This review of five institutions is a part of *Excelencia’s* commitment to increase awareness and bring attention to institutions of higher education in Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican students, and is a first look at efforts in resilience to address challenging circumstances in their current context and serve their students. *Excelencia* chose five institutions in Puerto Rico whose leadership agreed to share their institution’s experiences over the last five years. Students from several universities also shared their experiences. The participating universities included the following:

- 1) Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo
- 2) Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Gurabo
- 3) University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez
- 4) University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras
- 5) University of Puerto Rico-Utuado

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The institutions’ resilience efforts were focused on four core priorities:

- 1. Sustaining institutional management.** To address sustainability, these HSIs shared some restructuring strategies, such as staffing changes, consolidating their student services and academic programs, streamlining degree requirements, and seeking external funding.
- 2. Managing enrollment plans and expectations.** To address enrollment challenges, the HSIs enhanced and adapted their recruitment strategies to more intentionally recruit students. These strategies included expanding program offerings to students in the mainland, holding more Open Houses, placing emphasis on robust academic programs, and utilizing new outreach mediums, such as social media, to reach more students.
- 3. Supporting students by meeting their basic needs and providing wraparound services.** To retain their students, these HSIs aimed at more holistically serving their students and their basic needs. Institutions provided access to meals, additional financial support, mental health services and counseling, and continual and intentional outreach.
- 4. Preparing students for graduation and post-completion.** Institutional leadership at these institutions emphasized the importance of connecting their graduating students to Puerto Rico’s workforce through dedicated career development opportunities for students, internship experiences, job fairs, and opportunities for research experience and continuing on their education at the graduate level.

These institutions were resilient despite the disproportionately challenging issues that warrant a wider understanding and consideration. In their efforts to be resilient, institutions merged campuses and services, reimagined recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies, restructured institutional finances, and redesigned program offerings. What didn’t change was their commitment to their mission to provide their students access to a quality education.

INTRODUCTION

Resilient institutions have an intense commitment to their mission that inspires them to successfully adapt to challenges and create a “new normal.” As colleges and universities across the U.S. continue facing enrollment inconsistencies, demographic shifts, evolving expectations, questions of value, and constraints on their financial support structure, their resilience can determine their sustainability.

And while most institutions of higher education across the U.S. are facing challenges in financial and public support, demographic shifts, technology, and modernization, the colleges and universities in Puerto Rico have been confronting a convergence of challenges. They have shown resilience through catastrophic natural disasters, significant fiscal austerity, large demographic shifts, unexpected governance/leadership changes, and an unpredictable and ongoing health pandemic. While these challenges are not new or unique to Puerto Rico, their intersection during a relatively short period of time created a nexus that requires tenacity, commitment, flexibility, innovation, and adjustment.

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the U.S. Those born on the island are U.S. citizens, and all colleges and universities are U.S. institutions. Puerto Ricans also represent the second largest sub-population of Latinos in this country with over 5 million Puerto Ricans living in the continental U.S. and 3.2 million in Puerto Rico. In 2020, over 42 percent of those in Puerto Rico lived in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Puerto Rico also has the third largest number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in the U.S. and unlike most HSIs, over 90 percent of students enrolled in Puerto Rico are Hispanic. These HSIs work in more than one language, are attuned to workforce needs and are an international gateway for the U.S. economy, and have dealt with a combination of challenges for years— even before many institutions on the continental U.S.

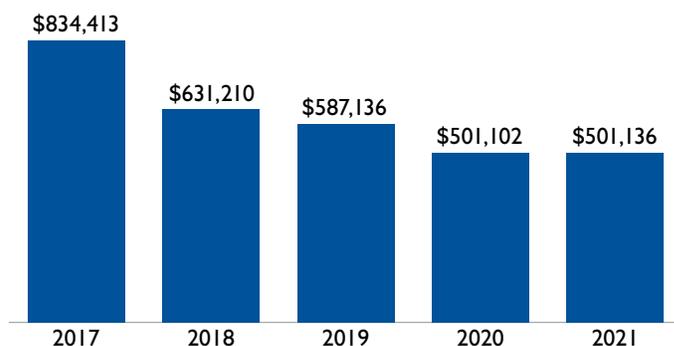
The last five years (2017-2022) have tested the spirit, structure, and sustainability of communities and institutions serving them in Puerto Rico. They have managed catastrophic natural disasters (2017 and 2020), fiscal austerity (2017), significant demographic shifts (2017), governance/leadership changes (2019), and an unpredictable and ongoing health pandemic (2020). While these challenges are not new or unique to Puerto Rico, their intersection during a relatively short period of time has created a nexus that has required tenacity, commitment, and resilience. Consider the following snapshot of challenges HSIs in Puerto Rico face:

Natural disasters: Natural disasters negatively impact the physical infrastructure, resource availability, and service priorities in a community. While Puerto Rico has experienced natural

disasters in the past, storms and seismic movements significantly increased between 2017 and 2022. Specifically, Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck the island within a two-week span in September 2017, followed by an unprecedented series of high magnitude earthquakes since 2019. As a result of these natural phenomena, all Puerto Rican institutions encountered loss of electricity, water supply, electronic communications, road closures, decreased sanitary and health supplies and services, and food availability that impeded services. The impact of these disasters accumulates over the years.

Fiscal austerity: Postsecondary education in the U.S. is supported by three primary sources: 1) local/state government (through direct subsidies), 2) federal government (through campus support and individual financial aid) and, 3) individuals (through tuition & fees). Puerto Rico’s financial crisis has had a significantly negative impact on the infrastructure and local government support for postsecondary education. In 2016 the U.S. Congress passed the Puerto Rico Oversight Management and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA)¹. This created a Fiscal Oversight and Management Board with broad discretion and powers over the Puerto Rican government, private funding, and spending. All institutions, infrastructures, and communities on the island have been severely impacted, and public colleges and universities have confronted significantly reduced fiscal support. While other revenue sources (such as the federal government) increased their financial support during this time and institutions have worked

Figure 1. Central Government Funding for the University of Puerto Rico system, 2017-2021



to improve their efficiencies to rein in costs, this has not been sufficient to offset the decrease in local funding. For example, by fiscal year 2021, appropriations for the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) (the public university system) were 40% lower than 2017 (decrease of \$333 million). (University of Puerto Rico, 2021)

Demographic shift: Over these last five years, the population on the island has been declining while the overall average population is getting older. This is in part due to the out-migration of the younger and traditional working-age population to the mainland and a declining birth rate. This has, in turn, resulted in the shrinking of the K-12 educational pipeline to higher education and a large decline in the population aged 18-24, that in turn negatively impacted the traditional pool of eligible college applicants and how institutions recruit and target students.

Governance and Leadership: The evolving and transitory nature of leadership during these challenging times resulted in multisector coalitions leading massive demonstrations and social protest against the incumbent government who had failed to address the immediate needs of Puerto Ricans in the aftermath of the hurricane, and ended in the resignation of the governor in the summer of 2019. The public Puerto Rican institutions experience relatively frequent turnover in their institutional leadership which presents a unique challenge in how these institutions implement and sustain their strategic plans. There is a marked contrast between the private and public sectors in the length of tenure of senior leadership positions. In the past 50 years, the UPR system has had more than 15 leaders. This is due to the tendency to link university leadership to political affiliation and electoral swings. In comparison, private institutions on the island, whether within a system or not, have had more stable leadership. (Huyke Souffront and Colón Rivera, 2020). However, between 2017 and 2022, all five institutions included in this brief have had a change in leadership.

Health pandemic: The COVID-19 pandemic added another complexity to the conditions and context in Puerto Rico. While distance learning options have been available on the island for a while, there were limits to infrastructure investments and the predominant modality of providing a college education had been in-person. With the pandemic, institutions needed to quickly pivot. In March 2020, as the COVID pandemic forced an abrupt pivot to virtual learning, most of the higher education institutions in Puerto Rico adjusted to implement virtual education measures that gave them access to federal financial aid funds under alternative modes of delivery of instruction.

The compounding effects of these fiscal, demographic, environmental, political, and health related challenges place Puerto Rican institutions at the nexus for adapting and restructuring their policies and practices.

This review of five institutions is a part of *Excelencia's* commitment to increase awareness and bring attention to institutions of higher education in Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican students, and is a first look at efforts in resilience shared by institutions to address challenging circumstances in their current context and serve their students. *Excelencia* chose five institutions of higher education in Puerto Rico who volunteered to speak with us in a series of interviews to share information on the institutions and students' experiences over the last 5 years: 1) Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo, 2) Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Gurabo, 3) University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez, 4) University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras, and, 5) University of Puerto Rico-Utuado.

1 Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act: <https://usc.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title48/chapter20&edition=prelim>

Figure 2. Locations of 5 Participating Institutions in Puerto Rico



BACKGROUND

In 2020-21, there were 80 institutions in Puerto Rico and about 183,000 students enrolled. Of these students, the majority (70 percent) are in the private sector (130,000) and about 30 percent (53,000) are in the public sector (NCES, 2020). On the mainland it is the opposite, the majority (85 percent) of Latino students are enrolled in the public sector and 15 percent are in the private sector.

While Puerto Rico is only larger in size geographically than two states (Delaware and Rhode Island), it has more colleges and universities than 35 states (NCES, 2020). Further, over half of the institutions in Puerto Rico are private, non-profit four-year institutions. While tuition and fees are still very low by comparison to institutions on the mainland, so is the median household income in Puerto Rico (Labandera et. al, 2021).

university system closely related to the social and economic transformation of Puerto Rico between the mid-1940s and the mid-1960s (Benítez, 1996).

UPR is more selective in its admissions than private institutions. UPR is a research-intensive system, comprising around 80 percent of total higher education spending in research and development in Puerto Rico (Santiago-Bartolomei, 2021). UPR offers degrees in areas such as public administration, social sciences, medicine, nursing, dentistry, as well as humanities and education.

A significant portion of UPR's funding comes from the government of Puerto Rico (over 60 percent). Less than 10 percent of UPR's revenue comes from tuition and fees. Although UPR's tuition is lower than institutions in the mainland, it has more than doubled in the past four years from \$57 per credit hour in 2018-19 to \$157 per credit hour in 2022-23 (University of Puerto Rico, 2021). Over 75 percent of UPR students depend on Pell Grant funding to pay for their education (NCES, 2020).

For this study, three institutions from the University of Puerto Rico are included: Río Piedras, Mayagüez, and Utuado.

Table 1. Colleges and Universities in Puerto Rico, by Sector, 2020-21

Sector	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
Public four-year	14	18
Private, non-profit four-year	45	56
Private for-profit four-year	10	13
Two-year	11	14
Total	80	100*

*Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Source: *Excelencia* in Education analysis using U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2020 Institutional Characteristics Survey.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO (UPR) SYSTEM

The large public system, the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) system, has 11 campuses and enrolled the majority of students in public institutions (about 50,000). UPR developed into a major

PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

The two largest private, non-profit systems in Puerto Rico are the Inter American University of Puerto Rico (Inter American) system, which has 11 campuses and Universidad Ana G. Méndez (UAGM). The Inter American system was first accredited in 1944 as the first liberal



arts college on the island (Inter American University of Puerto Rico, n.d.). UAGM was first accredited in 1959 as the first two-year institution in Puerto Rico and has since expanded to include bachelor and graduate level degrees (Universidad Ana G. Méndez, n.d.).

In Puerto Rico, private institutions are more likely to have open admissions than public institutions. Private institutions offer a wide array of degree programs from the certificate to graduate level. The Inter American system offers programs that range from certificates in aviation to a doctoral program in optometry. UAGM now has three main campuses and an online campus, which offer programs in culinary arts, engineering, nursing, and more. Both Inter American and UAGM have campuses in the mainland.

Private institutions are greatly tuition dependent; about 75 percent of their revenues come from tuition and fees. In 2022-23, Inter American's tuition is \$202 per credit hour, a slight increase from previous years (Inter American University of Puerto Rico, n.d.). UAGM's tuition has remained relatively stagnant over the years at \$190 per credit hour (Universidad Ana G. Méndez, n.d.). Although private colleges and universities in Puerto Rico are more expensive than publics, over 80 percent of students at private institutions are awarded Pell Grants to help pay for their education (NCES, 2020).

For this study, two private, non-profit institutions are included: Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo and Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Gurabo.

FINDINGS ON INSTITUTIONAL RESILIENCE EFFORTS

In this section, we summarize the resilience efforts of five Puerto Rican HSIs within the context and challenges they have faced. Following this summary, we provide a five-year overview of data on fall enrollment, retention, faculty, degree completion, revenues and expenditures, and cost of attendance and financial aid for each of the five institutions. We follow this data profile with key takeaways from the interviews with institutional leadership, highlighting the approaches each institution has taken to address these challenges. These approaches are not exhaustive but rather indicative of institutional efforts over the past five years up until the time of the interviews.

What is the operating context for these HSIs?

These five participating HSIs in Puerto Rico face the compounded impacts of a multitude of economic, political, environmental, health, and demographic challenges over the last five years. In 2016, the United States Congress declared Puerto Rico's nearly \$72 billion debt unpayable, leading to the establishment of a fiscal control board to restructure Puerto Rico's debt. As part of this debt restructuring, the federal government began implementing budget cuts to the University of Puerto Rico system. Student strikes emerged across UPR campuses protesting these budget cuts. The political unrest stemming from the strikes caused some of the UPR campuses to temporarily shut down. Months later, Hurricanes Irma and Maria ravaged the island in a span of weeks, cutting residents' access to electricity, water, and transportation. The damages caused by the hurricanes again disrupted the normal operations of colleges and universities across the island, delaying some students' educational progress and resulting in other students moving to the mainland, often with family members, to finish their education. Recovery efforts were slow and were only exacerbated by the subsequent earthquakes, which led to severe infrastructure damages and loss of life. Then in

early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about unprecedented challenges of financial precarity, distress, and isolation across these HSIs and institutions around the globe. Throughout this time, the demographic composition of the island has changed, resulting in the migration of many young people and families. This has created an increasingly older residential population. These cumulative challenges present a unique context in which these Puerto Rican HSIs operate, prompting them to pivot to innovative ways to adapt and thrive.

What challenges are these institutions facing and how have they adapted to be resilient in their current context to continue to serve their students?

SUPPORTING STUDENT PATHWAYS

CHALLENGE #1: Declines in enrollment. All five HSIs discussed how enrollment has decreased at their institution over the past few years. Their difficulty in maintaining past enrollment levels has caused a substantial reduction in tuition revenue necessary to cover core expenses, balance their budget, and fund normal operations (e.g., facility maintenance, staffing).

Response A: Increasing enrollment through intentional recruitment efforts. These HSIs

have enhanced and adapted their recruitment efforts to more intentionally attract students to their campus. Some institutions have expanded or revised their program offerings, established satellite campuses or programs on the mainland, or modified their admission criteria to reflect the challenges of the pandemic. These institutions also used a variety of methods to engage parents and students in their outreach efforts which included hosting Open Houses, targeting their outreach to their surrounding communities, and increasing their social media presence.

CHALLENGE #2: Retaining and graduating students.

Some institutions experienced a drop or fluctuation in their retention rates in the last few years as some of their students have withdrawn from their courses in a given semester or year due to the compounding impacts of the hurricanes, earthquakes, fiscal crisis, and pandemic. In some instances, institutions reported that they experienced difficulty retaining their students with some students choosing to work rather than continue their education. Some institutions attributed these more recent fluctuations in their retention to the pandemic's effects on students' learning environments and students' preference for in-person classes. Aligned with fluctuations in their retention rates, these institutions also discussed the drop they were experiencing in graduation rates in recent years. Given the overlapping challenges and crises happening in Puerto Rico, students at these HSIs are graduating at a later time due to the financial and emotional impact they have experienced.

Response B: Addressing basic needs, providing support services, and improving quality of education to retain and graduate students. To improve retention and graduation, these institutions aim at holistically serving their students by ensuring they are meeting their basic needs. These institutions focused on providing students access to groceries and meals through food pantries, and providing students with high financial need additional financial resources and emergency aid, especially making use of CARES

funding during the pandemic. Institutions also recognized the detrimental impact the pandemic had on students' mental health and quickly pivoted to ensuring students had continual access to mental health services, counselors, and advisors whether in-person or through virtual platforms. Some of these HSIs used their Title V grant funding towards providing intentional outreach to their first-year students. In their efforts to retain and graduate their students, these institutions focused on improving the quality of the education they provide. Some institutions restructured their curriculum and academic programs and/or streamlined the credit requirements in various programs in their effort to reduce the time to degree completion of their students.

CHALLENGE #3: Connecting graduates to Puerto Rico's workforce. Several of the institutions shared that their students graduate with skill sets and opportunities to enter the labor market and are choosing to leave Puerto Rico to pursue work on the mainland or other countries in Latin America, posing additional challenges for Puerto Rico's economy and declining workforce.

Response C: Providing career services and support to prepare students for the workforce and graduate education in Puerto Rico. All five of the HSIs described in their interviews either having a specific center dedicated to workforce preparation or embedding career development opportunities within academic programs. Some institutions described how students are required to gain internship experience related to their field of study within their academic program, allowing them to build connections to local employment opportunities in Puerto Rico. These institutions also shared how they connect students with local employers by hosting job fairs and networking events. Other institutions described restructuring their graduate programs or expanding the programs they offer to provide opportunities for students to deepen their research experience and continue their education in Puerto Rico.

SUSTAINING INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT

CHALLENGE #4: Fiscal and budgetary constraints. The HSIs we interviewed identified various fiscal and budgetary challenges exacerbating the need to restructure to ensure the institution's longevity. The public institutions have experienced decades of budget cuts that have only been heightened by PROMESA in the past five years. The two private institutions have grappled with tuition dependency as a revenue source, contributing to their need to adapt to enrollment fluctuations.

Response D: Academic and administrative restructuring. To address their fiscal and budgetary challenges, these HSIs have implemented various academic and administrative restructuring strategies. One institution consolidated its separate campuses to create one integrated institution with a central student services office, evaluation strategy, and curriculum. Other institutions have restructured or revised their academic curriculum in addition to streamlining their administration by changing the number of staff and faculty positions needed. As the institutions have adapted to these fiscal constraints, some have undergone leadership changes during the time of the interviews.

CHALLENGE #5: Decline in college-age student population. Some institutions attributed declines in enrollment to the decrease in college-age students. This decrease can be attributed to the out-migration of young adults and their families to the mainland over the past decade in addition to a shrinking K-12 student population. Throughout the interviews, the institutions discussed needing to change their enrollment management expectations and re-strategize their practices to address a changing student demographic.

Response E: Pivoting recruitment efforts to focus on adult learners and expanding to the mainland. To address a changing student demographic, some institutions have taken steps to

attract adult learners. These institutions provided specific courses or targeted their recruitment efforts around this population. Another institution expanded their course offerings to students on the mainland by establishing a satellite program there to serve the Puerto Rican diaspora and broader Latino community.

CHALLENGE #6: Persisting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic brought a myriad of challenges to the five institutions. Some institutions described difficulties in creating robust virtual course options and providing internet access. The majority described the pivot back to in-person learning as especially challenging, balancing educational quality with health and safety concerns.

Response F: Adapting to sustain educational quality. Due to the ongoing pandemic, all five institutions needed to quickly pivot to remote learning. Some institutions supplemented their efforts to continue to provide a quality education by implementing faculty training workshops. These workshops provided opportunities for faculty to familiarize themselves with new online technologies and strategize how to best serve their students. Other institutions focused on expanding and improving their technological equipment by utilizing external federal funds to pay for these enhancements. Several institutions also loaned students and faculty laptops, provided internet hot spots, or set up areas on campus where they could access the internet while adhering to social distancing guidelines. As the institutions transitioned back to in-person or hybrid learning, they took extensive measures to sanitize communal areas, create safety protocols, and offer opportunities for students, staff, faculty, and local community members to get vaccinated. Overall, Puerto Rico's vaccination policies were some of the most successful in the United States with over 95 percent of the population receiving at least one dose and 85 percent being fully vaccinated (Bathija & Resnick, 2022).

INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO-ARECIBO

ARECIBO, PR | PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT | 4-YEAR | 2,955 UG ENROLLMENT | 500 UG COMPLETION

Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo (Inter Arecibo) is a small, private, non-profit, four-year university, part of the Inter American University of Puerto Rico system offering certificates and associate's, baccalaureate, and master's degrees.

It is located in the northwest region of the island. Inter Arecibo enrolls 2,955 undergraduate students of which 85 percent are Pell-eligible. While Inter Arecibo has a higher enrollment capacity, its highest enrollment in the last 10 years was in Fall 2011 when they enrolled 5,459 students. The following tables provide five-year trends across institutional-level and student-level characteristics.

Table 2. Five-Year Changes in Institutional and Student Level Data at Inter Arecibo

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Fall Enrollment	4,305	4,288	3,913	4,013	3,313	▼
Retention	76%	73%	70%	74%	73%	▼
Total Faculty	83	78	75	75	69	▼
Degree completion	780	774	689	623	633	▼
Revenues (in millions)	\$23.8	\$23.1	\$23.2	\$22.7	\$22.5	▼
Expenditures (in millions)	\$20.5	\$20.6	\$20.4	\$20.6	\$19.9	▼

Note: Fall Enrollment includes undergraduate and graduate enrollment. See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources. Revenues include these revenue sources: 1) tuition and fees, 2) federal appropriations, grants and contracts, 3) state and local funding, and, 4) other revenue which includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts including grants and contracts, and contributions from affiliated entities. Revenues not intended to show total operating revenue.

Enrollment at Inter Arecibo dropped significantly in the latest year. While undergraduate and graduate enrollment dropped slightly in the years prior to the pandemic, Inter Arecibo saw a decline in enrollment in Fall 2020 (a decrease of about 1,000 students), see Figure A1.

Retention rates at Inter Arecibo have dropped slightly over the course of the last five years. Students' retention rates have ranged only slightly from 76 percent to 73 percent between 2016 and 2020, see Figure A2.

Table 3. Five-Year Changes in Cost of Attendance and Financial Aid at Inter Arcibo

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Cost of attendance: living off campus w/o family	\$19,348	\$21,989	\$21,989	\$22,453	\$23,553	▲
Cost of attendance: living off campus with family	\$12,034	\$12,725	\$12,725	\$12,647	\$13,747	▲
Grant Aid	\$5,330	\$5,194	\$5,003	\$5,469	\$6,567	▲
Pell Grant	\$5,039	\$4,962	\$4,763	\$5,430	\$5,443	▲
Federal Student Loans	\$3,580	\$2,992	\$3,571	\$3,421	\$3,091	▼

Note: See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources.

The cost of attendance at Inter Arcibo has increased over the last five years, and Pell Grants make up the majority of grant aid awarded. The cost of attendance at Inter Arcibo for students that either live off campus with their family or that live off campus without family has steadily increased (by \$1,700 and \$4,200, respectively). In terms of financial aid, Pell Grants made up more than 95% of grant aid awarded, until 2020 when Pell Grants were about 83% of grant aid awarded, see Figure A3. The amount of federal student loans borrowed was lower than grant aid awarded, and the amount borrowed has decreased in recent years. Overall, there is a significant gap between the cost of attendance and grant aid awarded.

The number of total faculty has decreased at Inter Arcibo over five years. Total faculty, tenured faculty, and faculty not on tenure track have all decreased since 2016 (by 14 faculty overall), see Figure A4.

The number of certificates and degrees awarded to students at Inter Arcibo has

fluctuated over five years. While the number of certificates and degrees awarded to students decreased slightly in the years after Hurricane Maria, that number has increased by 10 from 2019 to 2020, see Figure A5.

Inter Arcibo’s revenues have remained relatively similar over the past five years. From 2016 to 2020, Inter Arcibo’s revenues remained about the same (fluctuating slightly between \$24 million compared to \$22 million during this time). Additionally, Inter Arcibo’s main source of revenue is tuition and fees, see Figure A6.

Inter Arcibo’s expenditures have remained relatively constant over the past five years with a slight decrease in 2020. From 2016 to 2019, Inter Arcibo’s expenditures remained constant at about \$21 million, but dropped slightly to \$20 million in 2020, see Figure A7.

The following sections summarize the key takeaways from *Excelencia’s* interviews with institutional leadership at Inter Arcibo.

Institutional Management and Sustainability

Due to drops in enrollment, Inter Arecibo has expanded their academic programs to serve students on the mainland as a method to sustain their institution.

Inter Arecibo's expansion project to the mainland started as a result of decreasing undergraduate enrollment and a growing Puerto Rican community in Philadelphia. Taller Puertorriqueño², a community-based organization in Philadelphia, already provided workshops, conference opportunities, and several culturally relevant activities to the surrounding area but needed additional higher education pathways for students to access. As a result, Inter Arecibo now provides a robust bilingual teacher education program in Philadelphia offering two courses which will be gradually expanded to meet projected demand in the city. Inter Arecibo's leadership described this expansion project as a way to offset their recent enrollment challenges: "...what we might lose over here, we'll recover over there to support all."

In addition to expanding their academic offerings, Inter Arecibo also engaged in administrative and budget restructuring by reevaluating their annual budget, seeking external funding sources, and making staffing changes.

In order to maintain a balanced budget, Inter Arecibo introduced an incentive for retirement in which staff over 62 years old or those with

over 20 years of employment at the institution qualify. They also froze a total of 33 positions and eliminated 17 positions in order to cut down costs. At the same time, the university has tapped into other sources of revenue to offset recent financial challenges, including applying for Title V funding to enhance their academic programs, specifically in STEM. In addition, Inter Arecibo utilized CARES funding during the pandemic to offset their loss in tuition revenue.

"When the pandemic occurred, the institution responded quickly and made sure all faculty were given enough training. There were 163 total professors."

While the pandemic brought about an abrupt shift from in-person to remote instruction during the pandemic, Inter Arecibo provided their faculty with the training to support online learning and invested in better technological equipment.

Inter Arecibo developed seven workshop options which supported faculty with training to be more prepared to pivot to online learning and engage with their students in a remote setting.

To supplement the faculty training provided, Inter Arecibo invested \$1.7 million to enhance the video technology in their classrooms to accommodate virtual and hybrid learning.

² Taller Puertorriqueño
<https://tallerpr.org/>

Enrollment

The mass exodus of Puerto Rican young adults to the mainland has created a demographic shift in Puerto Rico affecting how universities attract and retain students.

Inter Arecibo's leadership described the changing demographics as a "downward curve with an accelerated slope" which is partly attributed to out-migration and a shrinking K-12 student population. In fact, they posited that there are "fewer children enrolled in first grade, preschool

and primary grades than those who are graduating from high school" posing important sustainability implications for the institution's future recruitment, enrollment, and retention plans. As such, Inter Arecibo's leadership emphasized the importance of focusing on the quality of the education they provide to both attract and retain students, emphasizing that their campus offers 55 programs for students to choose from out of over 200 in the entire Inter American University system.

Student Support

While Inter Arecibo had measures in place for hurricanes and earthquakes since they experienced them in the past, the pandemic was a phenomenon without precedent. Inter Arecibo pivoted to provide immediate counseling and technological support to their students.

The abrupt closures, social distancing, and overall uncertainty brought on by the pandemic had an intense emotional impact on Inter Arecibo students prompting the university to focus on providing virtual professional counseling and psychological services to their students. The university also provided laptops and lab equipment that students could take home to continue their studies. For incoming students, Inter Arecibo adapted their admission criteria by foregoing standardized testing as they recognized the challenges students faced accessing these tests during the pandemic.

“During the pandemic if the College Board entrance examination was not available, we would allow students to bring their grades and their high school diploma to determine admission.”

Inter Arecibo established specific vaccination policies and provided services to students, staff, and community members to provide a safe campus environment.

Graduation and Post-Completion

Inter Arecibo is focused on increasing graduation rates and tracks students post-completion through their graduation surveys.

Despite drops in degree completion, Inter Arecibo leaders shared that their campus' six-year graduation rate (37 percent) remains higher than the Inter American system's six-year graduation rate (36 percent), and are focused on increasing these rates. Beyond graduation, Inter Arecibo tracks student success and trajectory post-completion through graduation and alumni surveys.

“We have a group of students that are continuing their professional studies, some are going into medicine, some go to schools that have graduate programs, like in medical technology, molecular biology and that's how they continue their professional career.”

Vaccination policies and services. Inter Arecibo's vaccination policy posited that all faculty, staff, and students had to be vaccinated (all three doses) to enter the campus; otherwise students needed to enroll completely online. To encourage students, staff, and their local community to get vaccinated the institution offered on-campus vaccination centers to anyone who needed access to the vaccine. Inter Arecibo also rented a large mobile home that was converted to a vaccination center to mitigate travel challenges by going directly to their community members with vaccine options.

“Vaccines were available Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We wouldn't just offer services to students but also to the community, and that's how we were able to help them. If they needed a vaccine we had it here, that's how we supported our students.”

To retain current students during the pandemic, Inter Arecibo used their CARES funding to provide each student approximately \$1,100 in funds which was later supplemented by additional funds. Inter Arecibo also took students' financial need into consideration in distributing additional emergency aid.

Several of the academic programs offered at Inter Arecibo require labs, research, and/or other hands-on practice and experience that connect students with employment opportunities upon graduation. Particularly in health professions, students are recruited for employment in these fields even before they have graduated, a feat that Inter Arecibo leaders shared is a marker of their academic programs' strengths and student preparedness.

UNIVERSIDAD ANA G. MÉNDEZ-GURABO

GURABO, PR | PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT | 4-YEAR | 10,896 UG ENROLLMENT | 1,696 UG COMPLETION

Universidad Ana G. Méndez (UAGM) is a large, private, non-profit, four-year university with four campuses: Cupey, Carolina, Gurabo, and the online campus. For this case study, we focused on the Gurabo campus which offers certificates and associate's, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees. UAGM-Gurabo enrolls 10,896 undergraduate students of which 82 percent are Pell-eligible. While UAGM-Gurabo has a higher enrollment capacity, its highest enrollment in the last 10 years was in Fall 2015 when they enrolled 17,509 students. The following tables provide five-year trends across institutional-level and student-level characteristics.

Table 4. Five-Year Changes in Institutional and Student Level Data at UAGM-Gurabo

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Fall Enrollment	17,167	17,034	15,699	15,464	13,553	▼
Retention	76%	77%	75%	81%	76%	<>
Total Faculty	194	179	197	201	171	▼
Degree completion	3,120	3,154	2,868	3,099	2,604	▼
Revenues (in millions)	\$115.8	\$114.9	\$113.3	\$113.7	\$114.3	▼
Expenditures (in millions)	\$115.3	\$111.1	\$108.2	\$114.2	\$107.9	▼

Note: Fall Enrollment includes undergraduate and graduate enrollment. See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources. Revenues include these revenue sources: 1) tuition and fees, 2) federal appropriations, grants and contracts, 3) state and local funding, and, 4) other revenue which includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts including grants and contracts, and contributions from affiliated entities. Revenues not intended to show total operating revenue.

Enrollment at UAGM-Gurabo has steadily declined in the last five years. While over 17,000 undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in Fall 2016, by Fall 2020 enrollment dropped to just below 14,000 students, see Figure A8.

Retention rates at UAGM-Gurabo have remained the same in recent years. Since 2016, students' retention rates have remained at about 76 percent, except when it reached 81 percent in 2019, see Figure A9.

Table 5. Five-Year Changes in Cost of Attendance and Financial Aid at UAGM-Gurabo

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Cost of attendance: living off campus w/o family	\$20,320	\$20,320	\$20,320	\$20,320	\$20,320	<>
Cost of attendance: living off campus with family	\$12,320	\$12,320	\$12,320	\$12,320	\$12,320	<>
Grant Aid	\$5,260	\$5,447	\$5,580	\$6,748	\$5,967	▲
Pell Grant	\$5,049	\$5,098	\$5,375	\$6,605	\$5,721	▲
Federal Student Loans	\$2,753	\$2,881	\$3,044	\$3,652	\$3,242	▲

Note: See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources.

The cost of attendance at UAGM-Gurabo has remained the same over the last five years, and Pell Grants are the majority of grant aid awarded. The cost of attendance at UAGM-Gurabo for students that either live off campus with their family or that live off campus without family has remained the same (\$12,320 or \$20,320, respectively). In terms of financial aid, Pell Grants made up almost all of the grant aid awarded (more than 95 percent). While the amount of federal student loans borrowed was lower than grant aid awarded, the amount borrowed has increased since 2016, see Figure A10. Overall, there is a significant gap between the cost of attendance and grant aid awarded.

The number of total faculty at UAGM-Gurabo has fluctuated over the last five years. The number of total faculty increased (by 22) between 2017 and 2019 but dropped in 2020. In addition, there are more faculty not on the tenure track than there are tenured faculty, see Figure A11.

The total number of certificates and degrees awarded to students at UAGM-Gurabo dropped in years immediately following the

hurricanes and in the first months of the pandemic. The number of total certificates and degrees awarded to students remained relatively constant, except in 2018 after Hurricane Maria and 2020 during the pandemic (dropped by 286 and 495, respectively), see Figure A12.

UAGM-Gurabo’s revenues have remained relatively similar over the past five years.

From 2016 to 2020, UAGM-Gurabo’s revenues remained about the same (fluctuating slightly between \$116 million compared to \$114 million during this time). Additionally, UAGM-Gurabo’s main source of revenue is tuition and fees, followed by federal appropriations, grants and contracts, see Figure A13.

UAGM-Gurabo’s expenditures have decreased over the past five years, except in 2019 where there was a slight increase. From 2016 to 2020, UAGM-Gurabo’s expenditures decreased by \$7 million. In 2019, expenditures nearly matched 2016 levels at \$114 million, see Figure A14.

The following sections summarize the key takeaways from *Excelencia’s* interviews with institutional leadership at UAGM.

Institutional Management and Sustainability

Over the past five years, UAGM has worked diligently to rebrand and restructure their university so that it is one unified system with four campuses all providing the same types of services, policies, and academic opportunities.

In prior decades, UAGM was a system of four separate institutions with unique academic programs and administration. In the last five years, UAGM began a process of integrating each of the separate institutions into one university with four campuses.

(1) curriculum, (2) academic policies, (3) student services, and, (4) academic programs.

UAGM also created a comprehensive assessment model that collects feedback on the classroom experience, student services, administrative processes, and physical structures of the campuses. In this way, the university is intentionally evaluating how their consolidated services and curriculum are impacting their students and the broader campus community.

“We began this major project of academic integration... We are now just one institution. We are one university in every sense of the word.”

As part of the reconstruction process to merge the campuses, UAGM implemented a severance process which lowered the number of employees and relocated others in order to align with their new organizational structure. In addition to staffing changes, they consolidated and remodeled the following structures:

“During these past five years the university has demonstrated an agility to face challenges and move forward to cope with these demands. This has been a monumental task, but it has highlighted the agility and efficiency of the structure, the administrative personnel, and faculty. They have been involved from day one in these processes.”

Enrollment

Economic and environmental challenges coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted undergraduate and graduate enrollment at UAGM.

University leadership attributed the drop in enrollment not only to their recent environmental challenges, but also to economic and demographic changes that have driven students to seek opportunities outside of Puerto Rico. Over the past couple years, both undergraduate and graduate

student enrollment has decreased. In response to drops in enrollment, UAGM leaders shared that the quality of academic programs offered at UAGM, the numerous accreditations UAGM has, and the institution's historical background are ways the institution attracts students. These changes in enrollment have also prompted institutional leadership to reconsider the utilization of physical spaces on campus and how various spaces could be reallocated based on need.

Student Support

UAGM supports their students through providing academic and mental health counseling services, as well as supporting students' basic needs.

Basic Needs. To address the core needs of their students, UAGM offers an Emergency Aid Program, Food Pantry program, and parental support through the federal program Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS)³. CCAMPIS allows parents who enroll at UAGM to have their childcare costs covered so that they can focus on their studies. UAGM also started an initiative in collaboration with the Educational Credit Management Corporation (ECMC) which provides funds that cover non-academic needs such as transportation, water, electricity, or other needs that may contribute to non-completion.

“We have four full time counselors. We have a social worker. We have a counselor in rehabilitation who is the one who helps us with students who need reasonable accommodations. We have a part time psychologist and two interns from the doctorate level in that multidisciplinary team...our team is small, but we organize ourselves and this is the team that provides them with counseling, referrals, [and] external referrals.”

Counseling and Tutoring Services. UAGM offers a multitude of counseling services for students to meet their academic and personal needs.

The university also offers an honors program which provides its students with additional course options and tutoring support. For example, as part of the Engineering program, there is the Tutoring in Mathematics Program which offers support to all students from STEM, Health Sciences, and Business that are struggling academically in their math coursework.

UAGM has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by pivoting swiftly to virtual student support services and providing virtual learning platforms to support their students.

UAGM provided virtual counseling options to students by appointment with extra support services made available for students online to supplement pre-pandemic services. These services included access to mental health professionals such as psychologists, social workers, and rehabilitation counselors through their referral process. Moreover, students have been able to gain access to more course options due to the flexibility of remote learning. Generally, most students at UAGM enroll part-time, which demonstrates a growing post-traditional student profile in Puerto Rico. However, during the pandemic, these students were able to supplement their work schedule with additional coursework by enrolling in virtual and asynchronous courses.

³ Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/campisp/index.html>

Graduation and Post-Completion

Similar to enrollment trends, graduation rates have decreased in recent years. Despite these challenges, UAGM provides robust post-completion opportunities for students to prepare to enter the job-market.

The compounded impact of the hurricanes, earthquakes, and pandemic have affected the university's six-year graduation rates. UAGM leaders shared that the 2015 cohort had a six-year graduation rate of 26 percent relative to 33 percent for their 2013 cohort. Despite these challenges, UAGM described their university as resilient and demonstrating “an agility” when encountering economic, environmental, and demographic challenges.

To support the post-completion career trajectories of their students, UAGM has a career center on campus which connects both graduating and recently graduated students with job opportunities. This center provides career-readiness workshops and resume guidance to prepare students for applying, interviewing, and navigating the job market. Students also have the opportunity to apply for internships not only in Puerto Rico but on the mainland “where they can acquire other experiences which will strengthen them to the extent that they can graduate and adapt well to the labor market.”

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO- MAYAGÜEZ

MAYAGÜEZ, PR | PUBLIC | 4-YEAR | 11,776 UG ENROLLMENT | 1,701 UG COMPLETION

The University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez (UPR-Mayagüez) is a large, public, four-year institution in the University of Puerto Rico system offering baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral degrees. It is located on the western coast of Puerto Rico in Mayagüez. UPR-Mayagüez enrolls 11,776 undergraduate students of which 68 percent are Pell-eligible. While UPR-Mayagüez has a higher enrollment capacity, its highest enrollment in the last 10 years was in Fall 2017 when they enrolled 13,203 students. The following tables provide five-year trends across institutional-level and student-level characteristics.

Table 6. Five-Year Changes in Institutional and Student Level Data at UPR-Mayagüez

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Fall Enrollment	13,020	13,203	12,963	12,688	12,635	▼
Retention	92%	88%	88%	89%	92%	<>
Total Faculty	569	552	475	483	479	▼
Degree completion	1,844	1,784	1,720	1,789	1,895	▲
Revenues (in millions)	\$229.9	\$229.1	\$151.4	\$196.3	\$157.6	▼
Expenditures (in millions)	\$272.6	\$256.8	\$306.4	\$280.5	\$324.5	▲

Note: Fall Enrollment includes undergraduate and graduate enrollment. See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources. Revenues include these revenue sources: 1) tuition and fees, 2) federal appropriations, grants and contracts, 3) state and local funding, and, 4) other revenue which includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts including grants and contracts, and contributions from affiliated entities. Revenues not intended to show total operating revenue.

Enrollment has decreased slightly at UPR-Mayagüez in the last five years. While there was a slight drop in undergraduate and graduate enrollment over the last five years, current enrollment (12,600) nearly matches pre-hurricane Maria (13,000) and pre-pandemic (12,600) enrollment levels, see Figure A15.

The retention rates for students at UPR-Mayagüez have remained high in the last five years. Students’ retention rates have remained high during the last five years, ranging slightly between 88 percent and 92 percent, see Figure A16.

Table 7. Five-Year Changes in Cost of Attendance and Financial Aid at UPR-Mayagüez

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Cost of attendance: living off campus w/o family	\$17,865	\$17,865	\$19,876	\$19,950	\$21,450	▲
Cost of attendance: living off campus with family	\$7,502	\$7,502	\$9,513	\$9,587	\$11,087	▲
Grant Aid	\$5,007	\$5,248	\$5,457	\$5,416	\$6,316	▲
Pell Grant	\$4,954	\$5,130	\$5,169	\$5,172	\$6,062	▲
Federal Student Loans	\$3,206	\$3,286	\$3,352	\$3,452	\$3,602	▲

Note: See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources.

The cost of attendance at UPR-Mayagüez has increased over the last five years, and Pell Grants make up the majority of grant aid awarded. The cost of attendance at UPR-Mayagüez for students that either live off campus with their family or that live off campus without family has been steadily increasing (by \$3,600). In terms of financial aid, Pell Grants made up nearly all of the grant aid awarded (greater than 95 percent). The amount of federal student loans borrowed was lower than grant aid awarded, and the amount borrowed has increased slightly, see Figure A17. Overall, there is a significant gap between the cost of attendance and grant aid awarded.

The number of total faculty at UPR-Mayagüez has decreased over the last five years. Since 2016, the number of total faculty and tenured faculty has decreased (by 90 and 49 faculty, respectively), while the number of faculty not on tenure track has increased by 18, see Figure A18.

Degree completion has increased in recent years at UPR-Mayagüez. While degrees awarded decreased slightly in 2018 (the year after Hurricane Maria), degree completion has since increased (up

to 1,895 degrees awarded in 2020), see Figure A19.

UPR-Mayagüez’s revenues have significantly decreased over the past five years. From 2016 to 2020, revenues have significantly decreased by \$72 million. Revenues specifically declined in the year after Hurricane Maria (by \$78 million from the year prior) and during the pandemic (by \$39 million from the year prior). Additionally, UPR-Mayagüez’s main source of revenue is state and local funding, followed by federal appropriations, grants and contracts, see Figure A20.

UPR-Mayagüez’s expenditures have fluctuated over the past five years, although they have increased significantly after Hurricane Maria and during the pandemic. UPR-Mayagüez’s expenditures have ranged from \$250 million to \$324 million. In the year after Hurricane Maria, expenditures increased by \$50 million. By 2020, UPR-Mayagüez’s expenditures increased by nearly \$44 million from the year prior, see Figure A21.

The following sections summarize the key takeaways from *Excelencia’s* interviews with institutional leadership at UPR-Mayagüez.

Institutional Management and Sustainability

UPR-Mayagüez has strong branding and is known in Puerto Rico as *El Colegio*, reflecting the trajectory of Puerto Rico’s academic history.⁴

One of the strengths of UPR-Mayagüez to leverage, as shared by campus leaders, lies in how well known the campus is in Puerto Rico for its rich history in providing a robust agriculture and mechanical arts education as a land-grant university. UPR-Mayagüez is the top university graduating students with STEM degrees in Puerto Rico.

UPR-Mayagüez has faced multiple natural phenomena and changing population demographics and their institutional response and capacity to recover has varied depending on the context.

UPR-Mayagüez leaders discussed the institution’s ability to re-open quickly after the hurricanes. In their efforts to recover and support the community after the earthquakes, UPR-Mayagüez leaders shared that the Mayagüez campus houses the Puerto Rico Seismic Network.⁵ This network’s mission is to detect, process, and investigate seismic activity of Puerto Rico and adjacent regions, and is of significant service to the Mayagüez community and Puerto Rico overall.

Facing the impacts of COVID-19, UPR-Mayagüez responded to challenges brought on by the pandemic by assessing and supporting both student and institutional needs.

At UPR-Mayagüez, similar to other institutions, students, faculty, and administrators all have experienced ongoing stress and challenges in the midst of the pandemic. To support faculty and staff during this time, UPR-Mayagüez provided training on teaching in a virtual environment and with online courses, supplied faculty with technology, and published a weekly report informing the community about outbreaks of the virus. To support their students, UPR-Mayagüez used some of their CARES funding to provide additional aid to students with high financial need. In addition to financial need, students also faced challenges with the move to a completely virtual learning environment.

“They have told us that they are going to wait so that they can return... That blend of distance learning, hybrid classes, and other in-person courses have become complicated for some students.”

“With [Hurricane] Maria...we were able to open the institution and the students were allowed to come into campus. They had water here, they had electricity here, and they could do their assignments, their work at the different buildings... We didn’t take more than two weeks to get back up and going. However, after Maria, we had challenges to help our students get back on track. Further, with the earthquakes at that time, we really had to stop for a few days, because we had to make sure that the buildings were safe to be in.”

⁴ History of the campus: The UPR-Mayagüez campus was known as the College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (CAAM) for decades. <https://www.uprm.edu/portales/historia/>

⁵ Puerto Rico Seismic Network: <https://redsismica.uprm.edu/>

Some students at UPR-Mayagüez withdrew for a semester or more and are waiting for the university to return to in-person classes to resume their education. At the time of the interview in the spring of 2022, UPR-Mayagüez reported a marked increase in students who withdrew from their courses in Fall 2021, and the institution is tracking these students and following up with them through phone calls and in-person meetings to stay connected to ensure they continue their education.

Part of UPR-Mayagüez’s efforts to recover, sustain, and support their students have been in securing external funding, specifically grant funding from federal agencies.

The institution received financial support from the Department of Education in the aftermath of the hurricanes to support students financially and those in need of mental health services. In addition to federal emergency aid, UPR-Mayagüez received a Title V grant and focused this funding on retention efforts with intentional outreach and support services for their first-year students.

In addition to securing external funding, UPR-Mayagüez has undergone academic restructuring to sustain itself and attract students.

UPR-Mayagüez leaders view their institution as an “emerging research institution.” For example, they have created new graduate programs at the master’s and doctoral degree level, and revised the curriculum for a number of programs including those in Business Administration and Engineering.

Despite significant reductions in the institution’s budget and a resulting hiring freeze, UPR-Mayagüez has a strategic plan to hire more faculty in the coming years to fill the demand of courses in specific departments.

In the year prior to the time of the interview, UPR-Mayagüez hired 27 new faculty with plans in place to hire up to 30 new faculty, budget permitting. Through this strategic plan, UPR-Mayagüez aims to supply their students’ demand for specific courses and departments by hiring tenure track faculty.

Enrollment

While enrollment has declined significantly across Puerto Rico, UPR-Mayagüez experienced only slight drops in their enrollment in recent years.

As with other institutions across the island, UPR-Mayagüez leaders linked the migration of the young college-age population to drops in their enrollment. As such, UPR-Mayagüez leaders shared that the campus faces competition with recruiting

and enrolling students “with all the rest of the institutions here in Puerto Rico.” Nonetheless, UPR-Mayagüez leaders show that in relation to greater declines in enrollment in higher education in Puerto Rico overall, enrollment at UPR-Mayagüez specifically has declined only slightly. Leaders share that the university engages with families and surrounding communities, and with public and private K-12 schools to attract students.

Student Support

UPR-Mayagüez focuses their student support services on: first-year experiences, supporting basic needs, and providing mental health services to retain their students.

UPR-Mayagüez focuses on first-year experiences, intentionally follows-up with their first-year students, and ensures that their students' basic needs are met. Two programs institutional leadership highlighted were:

- 1. UNIV Course:** an 'Introduction to University Life' course directed at assisting students in their transition and adjustment to student life at the university, providing them with institutional resources and access to support services.
- 2. Come Colegial:**⁶ a food pantry program with a mission to fight food insecurity on the campus and community.

“Come Colegial has been an example for other University of Puerto Rico campuses. We have been working with this food pantry for about six or seven years.”

UPR-Mayagüez leaders shared their students were greatly affected by the hurricanes. In the aftermath, it was critical for the university to provide mental health support with access to counselors and psychologists for their students who lost their homes or relatives. Students received immediate counseling support and they also received follow-up for up to two years.

⁶ Come Colegial: <https://www.uprm.edu/comecolegial/>

Graduation and Post-Completion

Despite ongoing stress and challenges posed in the last five years, UPR-Mayagüez continues to retain, graduate, and prepare their students for the workforce.

UPR-Mayagüez leaders spoke of the resilience of their students, in their motivation to persist in their education and shared that they retain 90 percent of their students and graduate about 58 percent in six years. To attract students, UPR-Mayagüez leaders shared that the Mayagüez campus is well-known for connecting students to the workforce. Beyond completion, UPR-Mayagüez connects students with undergraduate research opportunities, internships and co-op opportunities through their career services and job fairs.

“The students have, as a part of their personality, a sense of resilience. This helped them to continue. It gives them motivation. They have a level of auto-motivation. These students have a greater probability of graduating. When the time for graduation comes, many of these students have jobs or are enrolled in a graduate school.”

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO- RÍO PIEDRAS

SAN JUAN, PR | PUBLIC | 4-YEAR | 10,784 UG ENROLLMENT | 1,936 UG COMPLETION

The University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras (UPR-Río Piedras) is a large, public, four-year research university and is the flagship in the University of Puerto Rico system offering baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral degrees. It is located in the capital, metropolitan area of San Juan, Puerto Rico. UPR-Río Piedras enrolls 10,784 undergraduate students of which 66 percent are Pell-eligible. While UPR-Río Piedras has a higher enrollment capacity, its highest enrollment in the last 10 years was in Fall 2016 when they enrolled 16,663 students. The following tables provide five-year trends across institutional-level and student-level characteristics.

Table 8. Five-Year Changes in Institutional and Student Level Data at UPR-Río Piedras

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Fall Enrollment	16,663	14,880	14,778	14,276	13,799	▼
Retention	90%	77%	84%	84%	84%	▼
Total Faculty	989	935	881	723	719	▼
Degree completion	2,276	2,320	2,454	2,514	2,398	▲
Revenues (in millions)	\$257.9	\$282.1	\$173.8	\$219.9	\$176.8	▼
Expenditures (in millions)	\$289.8	\$284.2	\$328.5	\$322.9	\$340.4	▲

Note: Fall Enrollment includes undergraduate and graduate enrollment. See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources. Revenues include these revenue sources: 1) tuition and fees, 2) federal appropriations, grants and contracts, 3) state and local funding, and, 4) other revenue which includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts including grants and contracts, and contributions from affiliated entities. Revenues not intended to show total operating revenue.

Enrollment has dropped steadily at UPR-Río Piedras since 2016. While almost 17,000 undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in Fall 2016, there were less than 14,000 students enrolled (13,799) by Fall 2020, see Figure A22.

Retention rates at UPR-Río Piedras have remained the same in recent years. While students’ retention rates have dropped since 2016, these have remained at 84 percent in the last three years, see Figure A23.

Table 9. Five-Year Changes in Cost of Attendance and Financial Aid at UPR-Río Piedras

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Cost of attendance: living off campus w/o family	\$18,658	\$18,626	\$20,674	\$20,758	\$20,778	▲
Cost of attendance: living off campus with family	\$7,497	\$7,465	\$9,513	\$9,597	\$9,617	▲
Cost of attendance: living on campus	\$17,860	\$17,828	\$19,876	\$19,960	\$6,366	▼
Grant Aid	\$5,195	\$5,172	\$5,248	\$5,419	\$5,852	▲
Pell Grant	\$5,042	\$5,095	\$5,092	\$5,176	\$5,311	▲
Federal Student Loans	\$3,460	\$3,467	\$3,464	\$2,242	\$1,805	▼

Note: See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources.

The cost of attendance at UPR-Río Piedras has increased over the last five years, and Pell Grants make up the majority of grant aid awarded. The cost of attendance at UPR-Río Piedras for students that live on campus⁷, off campus with their family, or off campus without family has been steadily increasing (by about \$2,100). The cost of attendance for students that live on campus is very similar for students that live off campus without family. It is important to note, the sharp drop in cost of attendance for students with on campus housing in 2020 was most likely due to safety measures during the onset of the pandemic. In terms of financial aid, Pell Grants made up almost all of the grant aid awarded (greater than 90 percent). The amount of federal student loans borrowed was lower than grant aid awarded, and the amount borrowed has decreased over time, see Figure A24. Overall, there is a significant gap between the cost of attendance and grant aid awarded.

The number of total faculty at UPR-Río Piedras has decreased over the last five years. The number of total faculty and tenured faculty has decreased since 2016 (by 270 and 150, respectively), see Figure A25.

Degree completion at UPR-Río Piedras was steadily increasing until the pandemic. From 2016 through 2019, the number of degrees awarded to students increased by 238 (from 2,276 to 2,514), but dropped slightly to 2,398 in 2020, see Figure A26.

UPR-Río Piedras' revenues have significantly decreased over the past five years. From 2016 to 2020, revenues have significantly decreased by \$81 million. Revenues specifically declined in the year after Hurricane Maria (by \$108 million) and during the pandemic (by \$43 million). Additionally, UPR-Río Piedras' main source of revenue is state and local funding, followed by tuition and fees, see Figure A27.

UPR-Río Piedras's expenditures have increased over the past five years. From 2016 to 2020, UPR-Río Piedras' expenditures increased by approximately \$51 million, see Figure A28.

The following sections summarize the key takeaways from *Excelencia's* interviews with institutional leadership at UPR-Río Piedras.

⁷ UPR-Río Piedras is one of the few institutions across the island that offers on-campus housing for students and is the only university in the UPR system to offer these accommodations.

Institutional Management and Sustainability

UPR-Río Piedras' current efforts in sustainability include their five-year strategic campus plan, *Compromiso 2018-2023*, resulting from ongoing challenges of the hurricanes in 2017, student strike, and others.

This strategic plan focuses on four key areas: 1) research, 2) updating an innovative academic offering, 3) fostering a relationship with the community, and, 4) increasing fiscal efficiency and sustainability.

UPR-Río Piedras leadership shared that in order to implement the four key areas they need to expand their funding sources and establish partnerships with external organizations in both the private and public sectors.

Academic restructuring. As part of their new strategic plan, UPR-Río Piedras revised curricula, consolidated programs and departments, combined undergraduate programs, and reduced the number of credits required to graduate to streamline the time to degree.

“All this [restructuring] has been done within a time frame. It took years to achieve a curricular transformation that the student could see, improve their academic progress and earn a degree. The restructuring had to align with mentoring processes, and we have different centers and different services to support the development of students' competencies.”

Political/Economic changes. UPR-Río Piedras leaders shared they faced overarching political and economic challenges in operating after the establishment of the Financial Oversight and Management Board, which exacerbated the fiscal crisis and bankruptcy of Puerto Rico.

Administrative restructuring, budget adjustments, and securing funding. UPR-Río Piedras is undergoing a change in presidency for the next academic year (2022-2023), and UPR-

Río Piedras leaders share that it will be a year of significant fiscal challenges. The campus has experienced a drop in \$71 million to their budget over the last five years as designated by the Financial Oversight Board. As a result of these budget adjustments, the institution has reduced administrative and staff positions, and secured external funding to use in other areas outside of operations.

“The Río Piedras campus maintains its role as a research-oriented institution. We have worked very hard to maintain that classification; we are the only one in Puerto Rico. For example, [the campus received] a donation from Banco Popular last year of \$1 million to do a revamping of the Business College. Natural Sciences has just received a grant to train high school teachers in research.”

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, UPR-Río Piedras used CARES funding to equip the campus with technology to be able to transition from in-person to virtual learning.

UPR-Río Piedras shifted to online classes relatively quickly using CARES funds, and created online platforms and mediums for students to communicate with administrators, faculty, advisors, and counselors for support. UPR-Río Piedras leaders expressed how the shift to virtual learning affected professors and students alike who did not have experience teaching or learning in a virtual environment.

“In a flagship campus like Río Piedras, whose strength is precisely to have in-person interactions, all of a sudden, that almost disappeared.”

Enrollment

UPR-Río Piedras attributed the decrease in enrollment in the last five years to student strikes, Hurricane Maria, and the migration to the mainland from Puerto Rico.

Over the last five years, UPR-Río Piedras' enrollment has dropped steadily after the student strikes in 2016-17, the hurricanes in the fall of 2017, and through to this year with the ongoing pandemic. As a result of drops in enrollment, UPR-Río Piedras has identified an opportunity for growth in recruiting and enrolling the adult learner population (25+ years old).

“[We have been] trying to attract the older population. There is something good about Puerto Rico, and that is that in the population of +25-year-olds, the percentage of people with a university degree is one of the lowest in the states. Therefore, there is potential with that population to find a way to improve their university education.”

UPR-Río Piedras leaders attribute the way they attract and recruit students to a combination of: recognition as the flagship institution on the island, strength in academic programs, and ability to provide financial aid to students despite the increasing cost of tuition.

Strength of academic programs offered. UPR-Río Piedras offers a variety of academic programs that are accredited and distinguishes itself as a research university.

“We are a flagship campus, we have the greatest variety of academic programs and the opportunity for [students] to be able to combine studies either through minors or second fields of study. Also, the student community can participate in exchange programs. We have more than 40 agreements with universities in different [countries].”

Recruitment method. As part of their overall recruitment method, UPR-Río Piedras hosts virtual information sessions, Open Houses, and also visits to high schools. This campus recruits students from all around Puerto Rico and does outreach on the mainland as well. UPR-Río Piedras hosted a drive-in Open House during the pandemic for students and families to be able to visit and tour the campus while maintaining social distance measures.

Prior to the pandemic, UPR-Río Piedras was strategic in their outreach and recruitment, by visiting students in the United States, particularly at two-year colleges in Chicago, as well as Texas and California. In their outreach, UPR-Río Piedras presented the institution as a more affordable option for students in these states. UPR-Río Piedras leaders presented at one of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' (HACU) events, and made further connections with institutions in HACU's network for potential outreach and recruitment of students on the mainland.

Student Support

To support their students in the midst of compounding challenges, UPR-Río Piedras offers robust mental health services and financial support.

After Hurricane Maria, UPR-Río Piedras submitted a proposal to the Hispanic Federation to provide funding to enhance their counseling and psychiatric services. These services were available to students, staff, faculty, and the community at various locations. In the financial aid office, UPR-Río Piedras has strengthened its communication with students regarding financial support by creating digital flyers and sending them

out through various platforms. Through these notifications, students are informed of which aid the institution has available to them, any changes in policies by the federal government regarding aid, and how students can check if their eligibility to receive aid has changed due to personal circumstances. They also hold live info sessions once a week with a financial aid officer so that students can directly connect and ask questions. UPR-Río Piedras has also increased the amount of financial aid awards in recent years to account for tuition hikes, dedicating some of this aid to recruiting adult learners.

Graduation and Post Completion

UPR-Río Piedras utilizes internal program assessment methods and career-readiness opportunities to improve graduation and post-completion outcomes.

UPR-Río Piedras leaders described graduation as always being an important student success metric at their institution, yet, in recent years, their six-year graduation rates have decreased with the current rate at 53 percent. As such, the university has implemented an internal analysis of their academic programs and the connection these programs have with the labor market. UPR-Río Piedras reviews how well each program's competency areas map with the needs of employers in that program's discipline

such that “the expectation is that all students leaving UPR-Río Piedras are employable in their disciplines.” To prepare students for the job market, the Office of the Dean of Students and employment office offers workshops on resume building, provides support in searching for employment opportunities, and hosts a job fair for all disciplines. Relatedly, one specific program, *Programa Enlace*, hosts an annual job fair focused on business administration disciplines. In addition, outside employers often contact UPR-Río Piedras and offer to visit the campus to give information sessions about their company or organization.

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO- UTUADO

UTUADO, PR | PUBLIC | 4-YEAR | 539 UG ENROLLMENT | 127 UG COMPLETION

The University of Puerto Rico-Utuado (UPR-Utuado) is a rural, public, four-year university and the smallest campus in the University of Puerto Rico system offering associate and baccalaureate degrees. UPR-Utuado is the youngest campus in the UPR system, founded in 1978. It is located in the central mountainous region known as *La Cordillera Central* (Central Mountain Range). Given its geographic location, mountainous terrain, and limited infrastructure for transportation accessibility, Utuado is often the most impacted by natural disasters yet tends to be one of the last municipalities to receive local and federal assistance (Rodrigues, 2021). UPR-Utuado enrolls 539 undergraduate students of which 84 percent are Pell-eligible. While UPR-Utuado has a higher enrollment capacity, its highest enrollment in the last 10 years was in Fall 2013 when they enrolled 1,504 students. The following tables provide five-year trends across institutional-level and student-level characteristics.

Table 10. Five-Year Changes in Institutional and Student Level Data at UPR-Utuado

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Fall Enrollment	1,429	1,136	831	655	539	▼
Retention	62%	48%	57%	76%	67%	▲
Total Faculty	73	60	51	43	43	▼
Degree completion	183	172	139	161	127	▼
Revenues (in millions)	\$16.2	\$18.6	\$10.9	\$13.5	\$10.7	▼
Expenditures (in millions)	\$21.7	\$21.1	\$23.0	\$19.9	\$21.3	<>

Note: UPR-Utuado only enrolls undergraduate students. See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources. Revenues include these revenue sources: 1) tuition and fees, 2) federal appropriations, grants and contracts, 3) state and local funding, and, 4) other revenue which includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts including grants and contracts, and contributions from affiliated entities. Revenues not intended to show total operating revenue.

Enrollment has steadily declined at UPR-Utuado over the last five years. In Fall 2016, about 1,400 undergraduate students were enrolled and by Fall 2020, just over 500 undergraduate students were enrolled, representing a drop in enrollment of over 60 percent, see Figure A29.

Retention rates at UPR-Utuado have increased over five years. Students' retention rates had been on the rise in the years after Hurricane Maria (up to 76 percent in 2019), but have since declined (67 percent in 2020), see Figure A30.

Table 11. Five-Year Changes in Cost of Attendance and Financial Aid at UPR-Utuado

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-Yr Change
Cost of attendance: living off campus w/o family	\$17,865	\$17,899	\$19,876	\$19,980	\$21,450	▲
Cost of attendance: living off campus with family	\$7,502	\$7,536	\$9,513	\$9,617	\$11,087	▲
Grant Aid	\$5,194	\$5,500	\$5,264	\$6,239	\$6,903	▲
Pell Grant	\$5,020	\$5,049	\$4,888	\$5,123	\$5,095	▲
Federal Student Loans	\$2,446	\$2,468	\$2,083	\$2,625	\$3,063	▲

Note: See Appendix for accompanying charts, variable definitions and sources.

The cost of attendance at UPR-Utuado has increased over the last five years, and Pell Grants make up the majority of grant aid awarded.

The cost of attendance at UPR-Utuado for students that either live off campus with their family or that live off campus without family has been steadily increasing (by \$3,600). In terms of financial aid, Pell Grants made up more than 90 percent of grant aid awarded, until 2019 and 2020 when Pell Grants were less than 85 percent of grant aid awarded. While the amount of federal student loans borrowed was lower than grant aid awarded, the total amount borrowed has increased in recent years. Overall, there is a significant gap between the cost of attendance and grant aid awarded, see Figure A31.

The number of total faculty at UPR-Utuado has declined in five years.

The number of faculty overall and tenured faculty has decreased since 2016 (by 30 and 18, respectively), while the number of faculty not on tenure track has increased since 2018, see Figure A32.

The total number of degrees awarded to students at UPR-Utuado dropped in years immediately following the hurricanes and in

the first months of the pandemic. While the number of degrees awarded to students at UPR-Utuado stayed relatively constant over the last five years (between 183 and 161 degrees), there was a drop in 2018 (down to 139 degrees) and again in 2020 (down to 127 degrees), the years immediately after the hurricanes and first months of the pandemic, respectively, see Figure A33.

UPR-Utuado’s revenues have fluctuated and significantly decreased over the past five years.

From 2016 to 2020, revenues have fluctuated significantly and decreased by about \$6 million. Revenues specifically declined after Hurricane Maria (by \$8 million) and during the pandemic (by \$3 million). Additionally, UPR-Utuado’s main source of revenue is state and local funding, see Figure A34.

UPR-Utuado’s expenditures have fluctuated over the past five years.

Expenditures have ranged from \$20 million to \$23 million from 2016 to 2020, with an increase in the year after Hurricane Maria (of \$2 million), see Figure A35.

The following sections summarize the key takeaways from *Excelencia’s* interviews with institutional leadership at UPR-Utuado.

Institutional Management and Sustainability

UPR-Utuado continues to face steep drops in enrollment due to the compounded challenges brought by the student strikes, environmental disasters, and the pandemic.

In 2017, UPR-Utuado's students went on strike as part of a system-wide effort to protest further budget cuts to the public four-year system. These budget cuts were a result of the PROMESA law established in 2016 to restructure Puerto Rico's debt. Campus leaders voiced concern that the student strikes would affect enrollment and retention.

"I think [student strikes have] had a strong effect regarding how future students see us, if they consider UPR-Utuado as an option for their studies. Many of them have decided to leave the university and come back when that's not happening."

As UPR-Utuado started to resume normal operations after the student strikes, Hurricane Maria struck (September of 2017). UPR-Utuado was one of the towns impacted the most by the hurricane due to their rural location. The institution experienced infrastructure damages and difficulties accessing electricity and clean water. These damages were further exacerbated by subsequent earthquakes in the following years, forcing the university to again close its campus for several months. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused UPR-Utuado to adapt their practices to enroll and retain their students. In five years, enrollment dropped almost 60 percent (from 1,429 to 539).

"...it's been so difficult to recruit and maintain students in the institution...it wasn't a lack of effort and support to students, but these have really been four very hard years for our institution and community."

Enrollment

Despite drops in enrollment, UPR-Utuado has adapted and enhanced its recruitment practices to more directly serve the needs of their prospective students.

Due to the pandemic, UPR-Utuado has improved their methods of recruitment to better engage students and promote their academic programs through the use of social media (e.g., Instagram), advertisements, and television commercials. In addition to leveraging new mediums of recruitment to reach students, UPR-Utuado also continues to actively engage with prospective students and their parents through individualized interactions to create a welcoming environment. UPR-Utuado leadership described their approach to recruitment as a highly personalized process.

To further leverage its widely recognized and robust agricultural program and attract students, UPR-Utuado established a high school program to enhance pathways for students interested in pursuing a degree in agriculture. Moreover, UPR-Utuado is the only campus in the UPR system in the mountainous region of *La Cordillera Central*, and is a main employer in its service area.

As the population in Puerto Rico skews older, UPR-Utuado has expanded efforts to provide academic opportunities for adult learners and students who have stopped out to further their education. As such, UPR-Utuado has a continuous higher education division that offers courses to "adults, retirees, and professionals".

"Since we're a smaller community we provide a personalized service to our students that, perhaps, at other larger campuses they don't have the staff or the time to do so."

Student Support

For current students, UPR-Utuado provides a myriad of student support services to address basic needs, academic success, and career readiness.

In 2019, UPR-Utuado enhanced how they serve their students' basic needs by starting an initiative that provided nutritional food options for those who cannot afford it in addition to personal care products. Moreover, at the start of every semester, academic and student coordinators introduce new students to the various services available to them and set up every student with an academic advisor.

“...we know students transitioning to college have some challenges, so we tell them to go to the [advising or counseling] office, sit down with a professional counselor, establish a study plan, evaluate their learning skill sets, and learn about time management.”

Graduation and Post-Completion

UPR-Utuado leaders highlighted the importance of preparing and connecting their students to the workforce in Puerto Rico through the career services embedded within their academic programs.

Embedded within many of UPR-Utuado's academic programs to prepare students for the job market, students are exposed to career readiness opportunities such as resume building and internship experiences. As an example, the

business administration program requires their students to complete 200 hours of supervised internship training to equip students with the necessary skills for the workforce. UPR-Utuado leaders shared how several companies and organizations seek out their students with employment opportunities, even prior to students' graduation, speaking to the preparedness of their students, skillsets gained, and the strength of the academic programs offered.



STUDENT VOICES

Excelencia in Education interviewed 17 students from private and public institutions in Puerto Rico to understand their college experience amidst the compounding challenges Puerto Rico has experienced over the past five years. The student narratives summarized below are meant to be indicative, not representative, of students' experiences in Puerto Rico. During the group interviews, students shared how they navigated their college options, how they paid for college, what types of support services their institution provided, and how the recent environmental and health challenges have impacted their college experience.

STUDENT PROFILE

Of the 17 students interviewed, 10 students identified as female and 7 identified as male. Most students were further along in their academic programs (in their third year or higher), however we interviewed students across all academic years. Students' majors included Accounting, Agriculture, Biology, Engineering, Marketing, Education, Culinary Arts, and Criminology. The majority of the students interviewed lived in close proximity (e.g., surrounding regions and towns) to their institutions and commuted to campus, similar to many Latino students on the mainland. It is important to note that the students interviewed in this case study were willing to commute up to 1.5 hours in their efforts to live at home while enrolled.

COLLEGE CHOICE

In navigating their college options, many students identified proximity to home, prestige of the institution, availability of academic programs, affordability, infrastructure quality, and the campus climate as important factors in their choice process. Several students discussed how the relative proximity of the campus was a core factor for determining which institution they wanted to attend. Most students determined which set of institutions to choose from depending on the commute. For these students, their college choice set was bounded by which institutions were within driving distance from their home. This is in

part due to the fact that public transportation in Puerto Rico is limited and inconsistent, an issue further exacerbated by Hurricane Maria (Reuters, 2019). Moreover, most Puerto Rican colleges and universities do not have on-campus housing, requiring students to either commute from home or find an apartment near the campus.

In narrowing their options of local institutions to attend, some of the students identified the relative prestige of the university and/or the academic programs offered as important factors in choosing where to attend. For some students, the academic rigor of a specific program at their institution drove them to choose that option, while for others it was the lack of programmatic options aligned with their career goals at other institutions that contributed to them choosing their institution. Similarly, the availability of financial aid to cover tuition and other costs (e.g., food, transportation) influenced students' college choice such that many students chose an institution that offered them enough financial support to pursue their studies. While mentioned less frequently, the infrastructure of the institution itself and its campus climate were also indicators of students' decisions. One student in particular spoke about the accessibility of the campus as being a core component for choosing one institution over another given the needs of their physical disability. For some students, it was the welcoming environment created by faculty and staff that contributed to their choice.

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Many students in Puerto Rico are low-income, as such most of the students that participated in the group interviews shared the pragmatic ways they pay for their college education. A majority of the students in the interviews rely on the Pell grant, additional scholarships and grant aid, and on working part-time to finance their education. One particular student took out federal loans to help pay for their education and worked part-time while enrolled to help make payments towards their outstanding balance. In addition, these students are offsetting their college costs by living with family to save on expenses such as rent and utilities. When their institutions offered free parking, students shared that this was a significant relief, as the cost of parking and gas for their commute often is a financial burden or barrier. Some students shared that they are able to afford their education because their institution offers payment plans, so that students can pay-as-they-go. For students that received additional scholarships and grant aid, whether through the honors program or the President's or Dean's scholarship, this additional support meant that students could also use this funding to address their basic needs such as food, transportation, and others. One student shared that an area for improving financial support could be for their institution to consider providing additional financial aid for students enrolled in summer courses.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Generally, students emphasized the availability of student support services provided at their institutions. Namely, the students shared how services geared towards students' mental health, academic success, and career advancement were the most prominent and beneficial in their college trajectory thus far.

Mental Health Services. Students in our study described access to quality mental health services as an important characteristic of a supportive campus environment. Given the challenges students have faced in recent years, students in

our interviews voiced how the mental health services and workshops their institution offered were instrumental in helping them navigate their hardships. Students also described their institution as being communicative and transparent in reminding students of the mental health services offered on campus year-round. Some students commended their institution for hosting mental health and wellness forums to provide additional support to students.

Academic Support. Overall, students felt that their institution supported them academically by providing robust advising and tutoring services as well as dedicated study spaces. For example, one student described that they were contemplating a different career path and their academic advisor provided guidance and support to help them switch majors. In terms of tutoring, most students reported the benefits of having a tutoring center on campus, helping students gain important study skills and improve their learning in a given course. Students also described the importance of their institution having designated study spaces on campus, especially for students without access to a quiet study space at home.

Career Services. Many students described career building opportunities being embedded within their programs or, more specifically, in their courses. For example, some students received emails from their departments about employment opportunities and information about joining different discipline-specific associations for students' professional development in their given field. Students also expressed how some of their coursework provided them opportunities to work on resume-building. Other students voiced how it was the student organizations outside of their department that provided them with the most practical exposure to the types of skill sets they would need to pursue careers within their discipline. Students described how their programs encouraged students to explore graduate programs as another option post-graduation by informing students of which programs they could apply for.

FACULTY SUPPORT

Overall, students shared that the faculty at their institution provide a welcoming environment where the professors genuinely care for their students' academic progress and overall well-being. In terms of academic support, students described faculty as adaptive in their approach to instruction, with one student describing how a faculty member recorded their lectures to help accommodate that student's demanding work schedule. Students shared that faculty at their institution also assisted students with questions regarding academic advising and employment opportunities. Beyond academic support, students expressed that their instructors were proactive to their needs and made themselves accessible for students to feel comfortable reaching out to seek guidance on nonacademic challenges.

IMPACT OF HURRICANE MARIA AND EARTHQUAKES

The past five years in Puerto Rico have been particularly challenging, but despite the hardships they experienced, the students voiced how they have continued to be resilient and adaptive on their path to earn a degree. Several students relayed the difficult moments and hardships they experienced in the aftermath of the hurricanes and earthquakes, dealing with loss of electricity, water, and other utilities. The impact of the hurricanes and earthquakes affected students' mental health, with several students articulating how difficult it was to stay focused and study during that time. One particular student described the pressure and uncertainty as triggering a "fight or flight" response in terms of forcing themselves to make progress towards their degrees. Despite these difficulties, students expressed their gratitude for the overwhelming support they received from faculty and instructors, who remained in frequent communication with their students and treated students with empathy. Some students even shared that they felt safe returning to campus after the hurricanes and earthquakes because they knew their institution had taken the appropriate measures and protocols to ensure campus buildings were structurally sound for everyone's safety.



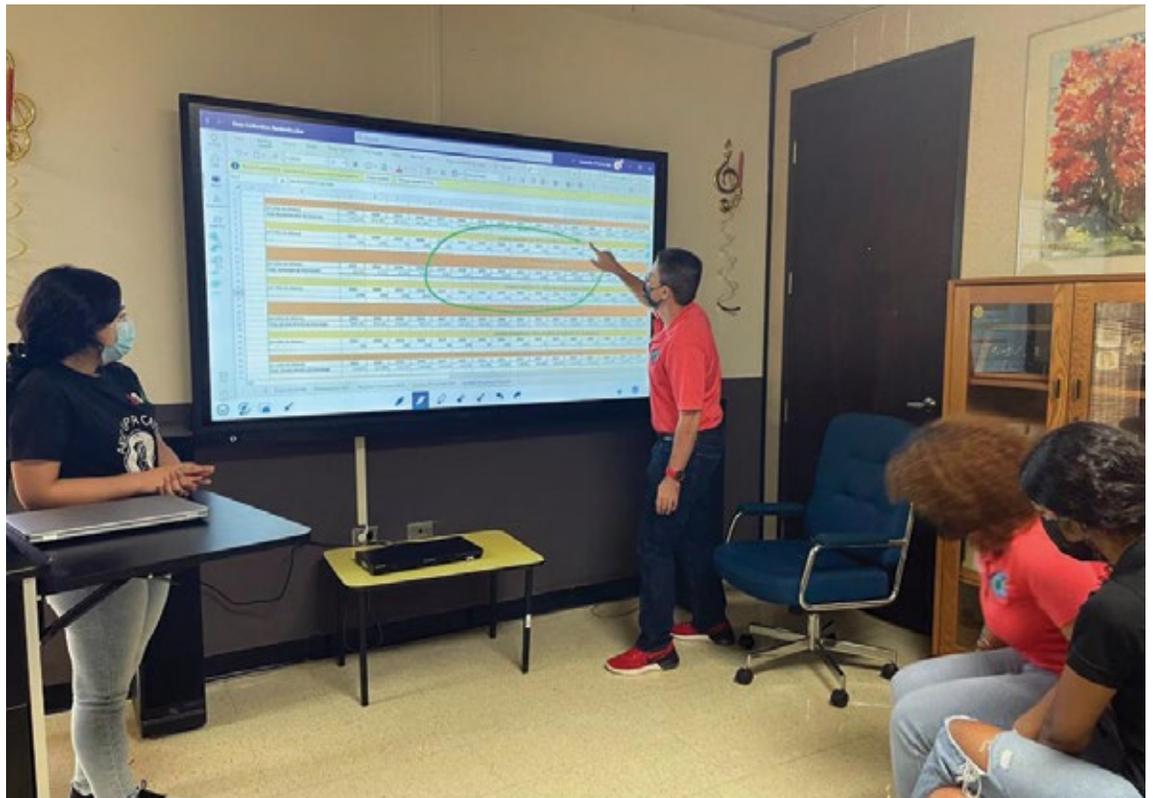
IMPACT OF COVID-19

Amidst the compounding challenges in Puerto Rico in the last five years, of greatest impact for the students interviewed has been the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Students described the difficulty in pivoting to online learning and studying from home, emphasizing the changing dynamic of their studying and college experience relative to in-person learning. Students felt stressed and overwhelmed as they adapted to new ways of learning and attending their classes. However, students articulated how their institution's response in providing emergency funds, establishing robust safety protocol, and training faculty to respond to students' needs were instrumental in helping them persist.

Financial support through CARES. Most students spoke about how beneficial CARES funding was in providing them additional financial support. This additional emergency aid helped students better address their basic needs during the pandemic and provided some financial stability during this time. Some students shared that with this additional aid they were able to purchase laptops to use at home to study and attend their online courses during the pandemic.

Adapting to remote learning. Most students described the shift from in-person to remote learning as particularly challenging. For some students, accessing the internet to attend their courses was difficult because their Wifi connection sometimes failed. However, students emphasized that their institution quickly pivoted to provide support for students experiencing these issues. For some students, their institution supplied them with hotspots and loaned them laptops, as well as designated areas on campus where students could connect to Wifi while adhering to social distancing policies. Students also explained that their institution provided lab materials and equipment for students so that they could still engage with the course material from their homes. Moreover, professors were described as empathetic to students given the situation and pivot to online learning. One student described how their professor allowed them to join the class from their phone due to Wifi connectivity issues, allowing them to not miss any classes. Additionally, students shared that professors received training through various workshops on how to use and teach through virtual platforms.

Safety protocol and vaccine availability. Students shared the various methods and protocols that their institution instilled to ensure the safety and health of all since the start of the pandemic. Early on, students relayed how their institutions set up testing sites on their campuses, sent out consistent reporting on the number of cases reported on campus, and also set up vaccination clinics once vaccines were available. If students or staff did not have healthcare, students shared that their institution provided access to medical services. To return to campus through a hybrid approach, students shared that their institution established certain requirements including: alternating the days on which students were allowed to be on campus based on their student ID number, requiring proof of vaccination and wearing masks, disinfecting and sanitizing classroom and all shared spaces on campus, and downsizing the class sizes for courses that needed to remain in-person.



CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This case study was the second phase of a multi-tiered project, the first of which was *Higher Education in Puerto Rico: Conditions and Context Influencing Institutional Resilience*, an environmental scan of the community and context of higher education in Puerto Rico. This environmental scan provided an overview of the community overall, the socio-economic profile and K-12 educational pipeline, the condition of institutions of higher education, and connections to the workforce over the past several years.

This case study complemented the findings of the environmental scan by providing a first look at how five institutions have demonstrated institutional resilience by adapting to serve their Latino students given the conditions and context of the island over the last five years.

We summarize these institutional efforts that emerged through this case study below.

- **Sustaining institutional management.** Leadership at these five institutions described the restructuring strategies they implemented to sustain their institution. Some of these strategies included making staffing changes, consolidating their student services and academic programs, streamlining degree requirements, and seeking external funding.
- **Managing enrollment plans and expectations.** To address enrollment challenges, these HSIs have enhanced and adapted their recruitment strategies to more intentionally recruit students to their institution. These strategies included expanding program offerings to students in the mainland, holding Open Houses, placing emphasis on robust academic programs, and utilizing new outreach mediums such as social media to reach more students.
- **Supporting students by meeting their basic needs and providing wraparound services.** To improve retention, these institutions aimed at holistically serving their students by meeting students' basic needs. Institutions provided access to meals, additional financial support, mental health services and counseling, and intentional outreach throughout their students' trajectory.
- **Preparing students for graduation and post-completion.** Institutional leadership at these institutions emphasized the importance of connecting their graduating students to Puerto Rico's workforce through dedicated career development opportunities for students, internship experiences, job fairs, and opportunities to engage in research and continue their education at the graduate level.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there were some changes made to the scope of this case study. As originally intended, this project included site visits to the institutions in Puerto Rico, in-person interviews with institutional leaders and administrators, and in-person focus groups with students. Our *Excelencia* team and participating institutions and students all pivoted and adapted such that in the spring of 2022 the interviews with leaders and focus groups with students were held virtually.

While this study is meant to be indicative, not representative of institutional efforts across Puerto Rico, there is an opportunity with what we learned from the experiences and efforts of these five institutions to go deeper with future research.

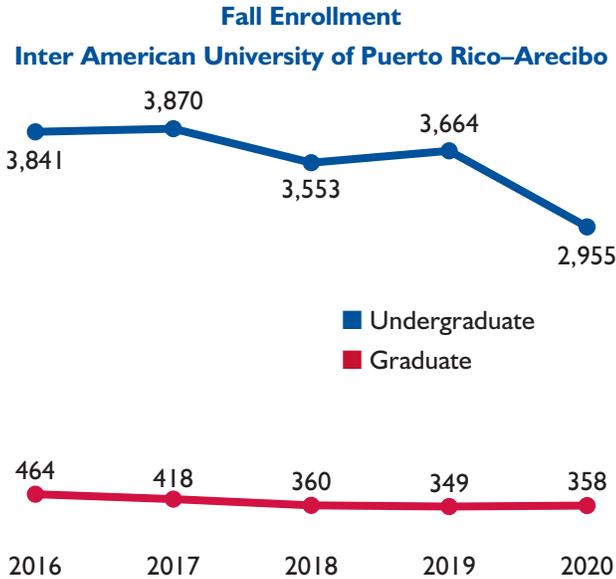
QUESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

1. How are institutions in Puerto Rico demonstrating institutional sustainability through expansion efforts to the mainland and the consolidation of their campuses?
2. How have other institutions across the island adapted to be resilient over the last five years?
3. How do institutions in Puerto Rico engage with their status as an HSI and utilize federal funding (e.g. Title V) to advance efforts to serve their Latino students?
4. How can institutions in Puerto Rico create and strengthen engagement with national research and advocacy organizations, business and industry, philanthropic organizations, and institutional partners on the mainland to increase funding opportunities, connections to the workforce, and garner support from the mainland?
5. How can these efforts of resilience be sustained long term?

APPENDIX: Institutional Data Profile Visualizations

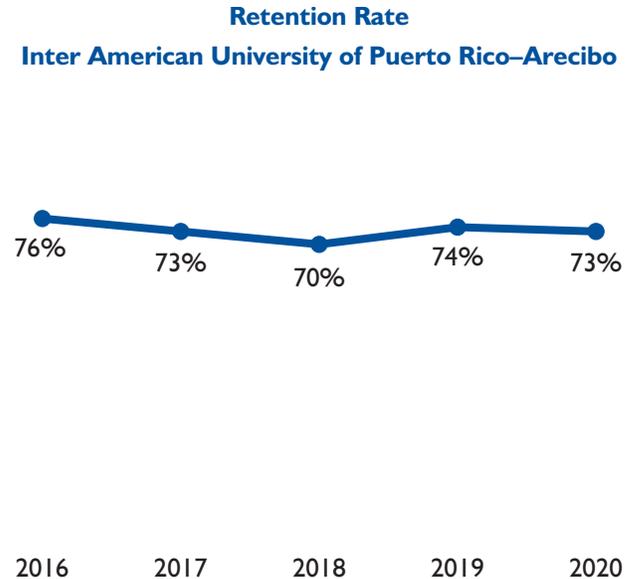
Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo

FIGURE A1.



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A2.

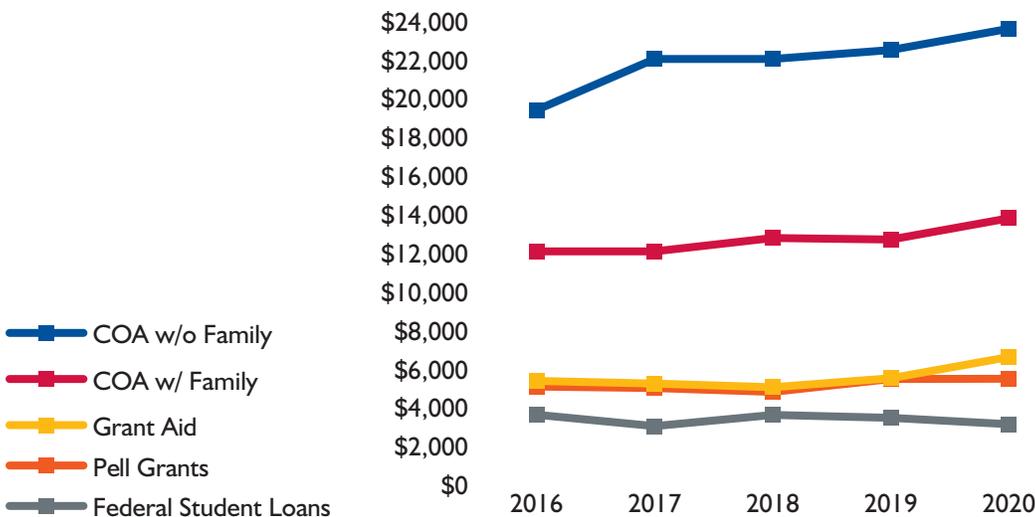


Note: Includes full-time first-time degree/certificate seeking students enrolled at the institution in the fall of the prior year.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A3.

Cost of Attendance (COA) and Student Financial Aid Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo

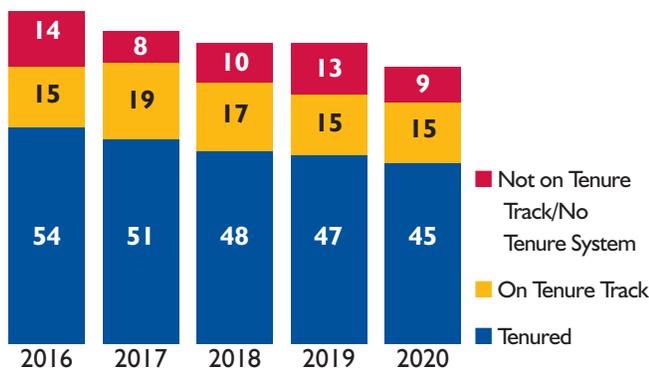


Note: Living arrangements are factored into the calculation of cost of attendance as follows: 1) living off campus with family, or, 2) living off campus without family.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A4.

Full-Time Faculty by Tenure Status
Inter American University of Puerto Rico–Arecibo

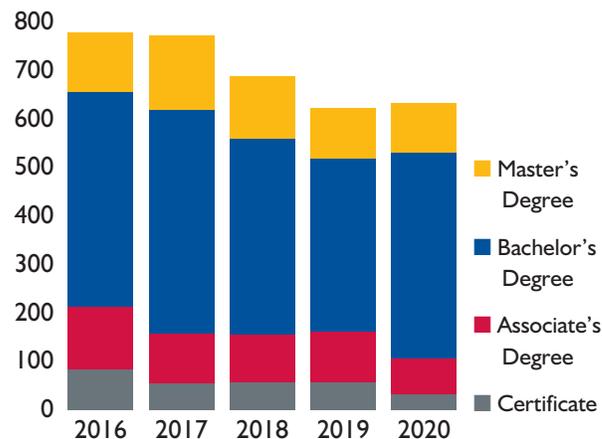


Note: IPEDS definitions of faculty rank are as follows. Tenure: status of a personnel position with respect to permanence of position. On Tenure Track: Personnel positions that lead to consideration for tenure. Not on Tenure Track: personnel positions that are considered non-tenure earning positions.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Staff and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A5.

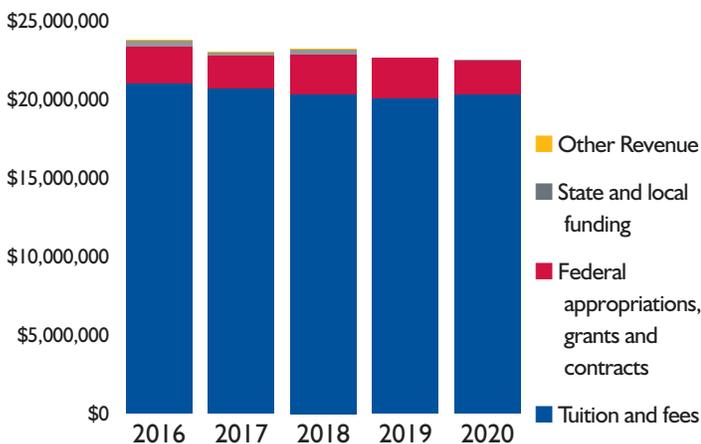
Degrees Awarded
Inter American University of Puerto Rico–Arecibo



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A6.

Revenues by Source
Inter American University of Puerto Rico–Arecibo

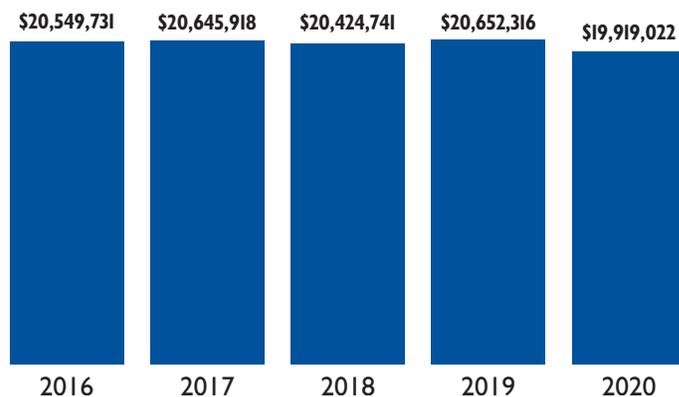


Note: Other includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts includes grants and contracts, contributions from affiliated entities. Additionally, private institutions typically report Pell Grants as revenues from tuition and fees rather than as revenues from federal grants.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A7.

Expenditures
Inter American University of Puerto Rico–Arecibo

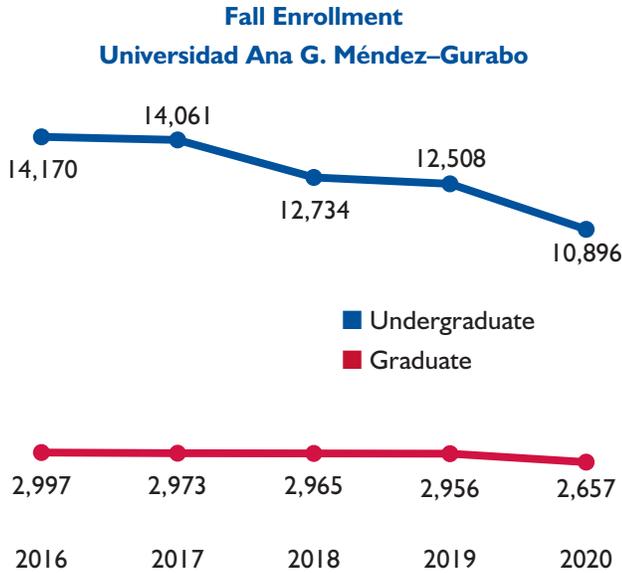


Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

APPENDIX: Institutional Data Profile Visualizations

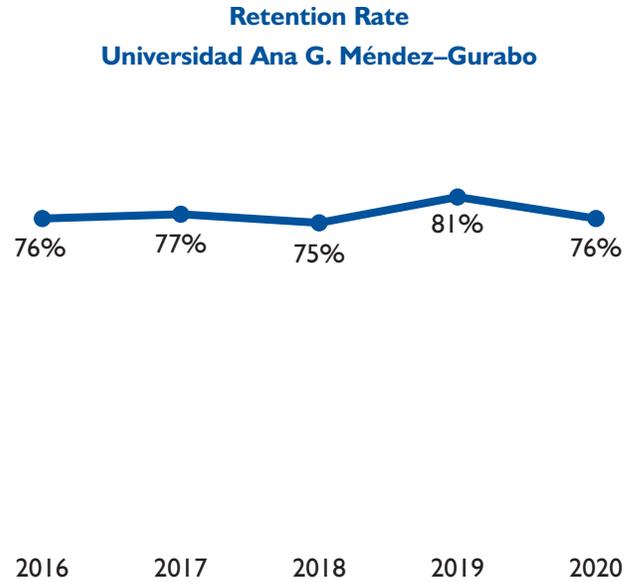
Universidad Ana G. Méndez–Gurabo

FIGURE A8.



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A9.

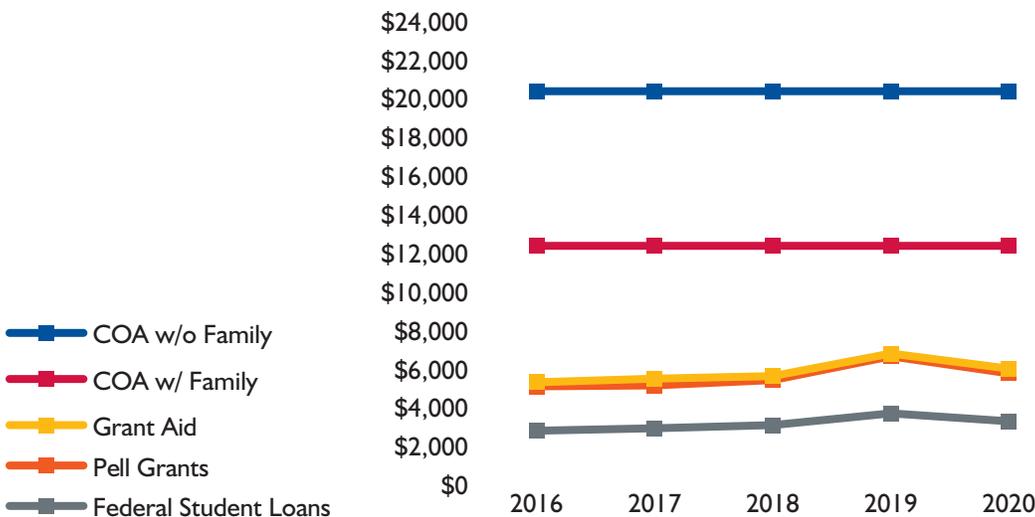


Note: Includes full-time first-time degree/certificate seeking students enrolled at the institution in the fall of the prior year.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A10.

Cost of Attendance (COA) and Student Financial Aid Universidad Ana G. Méndez–Gurabo

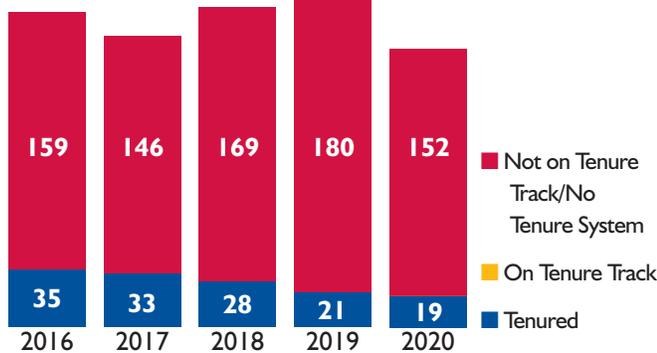


Note: Living arrangements are factored into the calculation of cost of attendance as follows: 1) living off campus with family, or, 2) living off campus without family.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A11.

Full-Time Faculty by Tenure Status
Universidad Ana G. Méndez–Gurabo

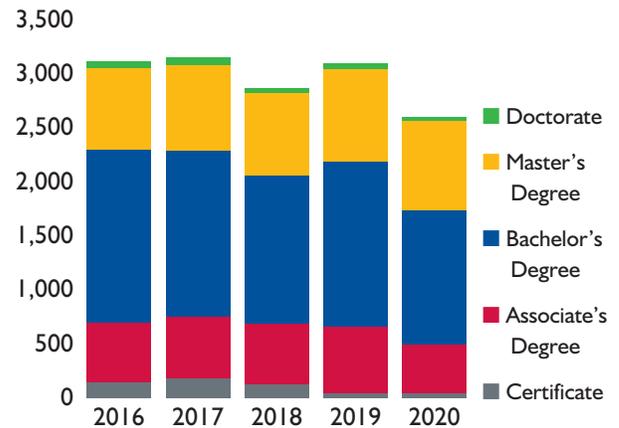


Note: IPEDS definitions of faculty rank are as follows. Tenure: status of a personnel position with respect to permanence of position. On Tenure Track: Personnel positions that lead to consideration for tenure. Not on Tenure Track: personnel positions that are considered non-tenure earning positions.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Staff and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A12.

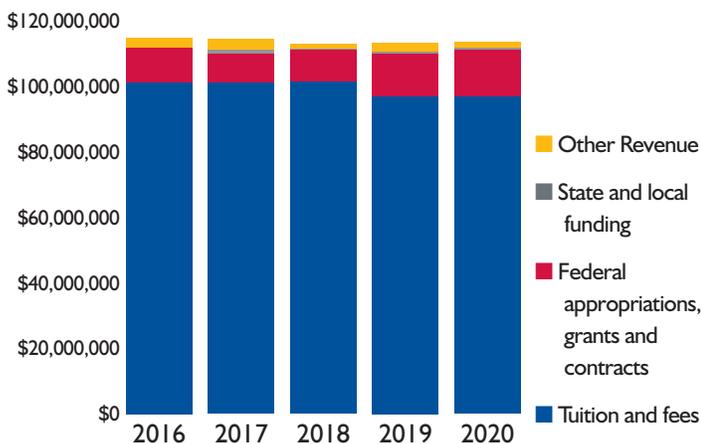
Degrees Awarded
Universidad Ana G. Méndez–Gurabo



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A13.

Revenues by Source
Universidad Ana G. Méndez–Gurabo

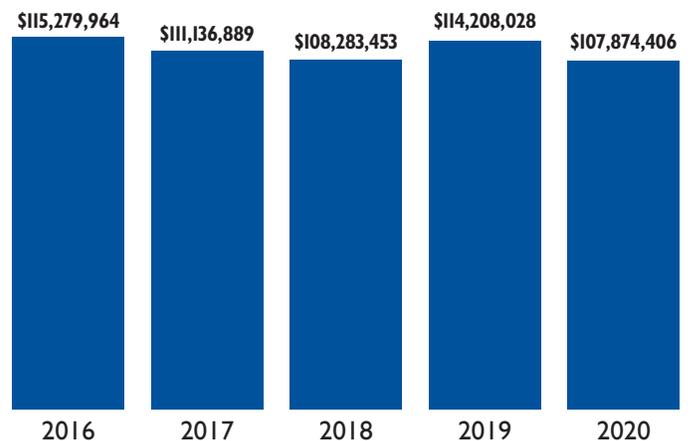


Note: Other includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts includes grants and contracts, contributions from affiliated entities. Additionally, private institutions typically report Pell Grants as revenues from tuition and fees rather than as revenues from federal grants.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A14.

Expenditures
Universidad Ana G. Méndez–Gurabo

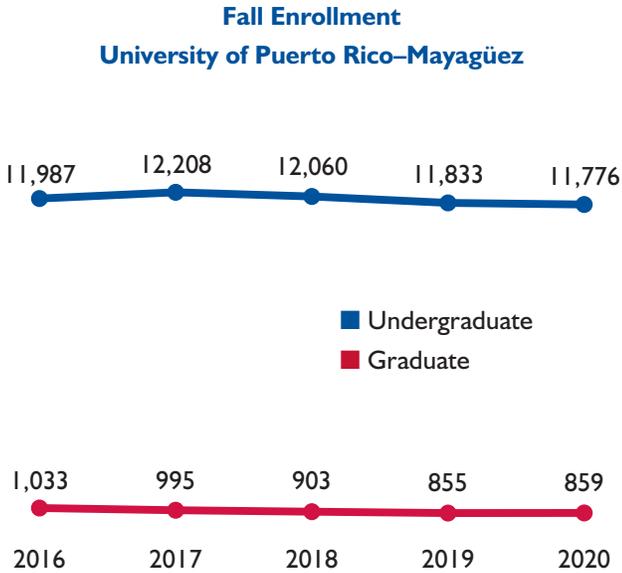


Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

APPENDIX: Institutional Data Profile Visualizations

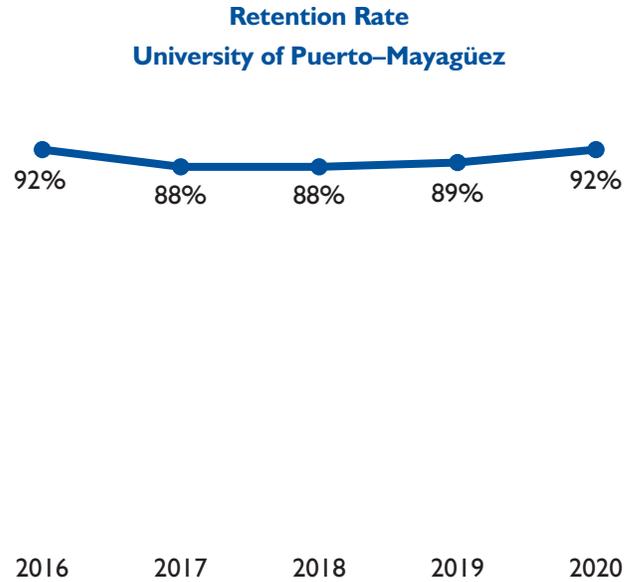
University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez

FIGURE AI5.



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE AI6.

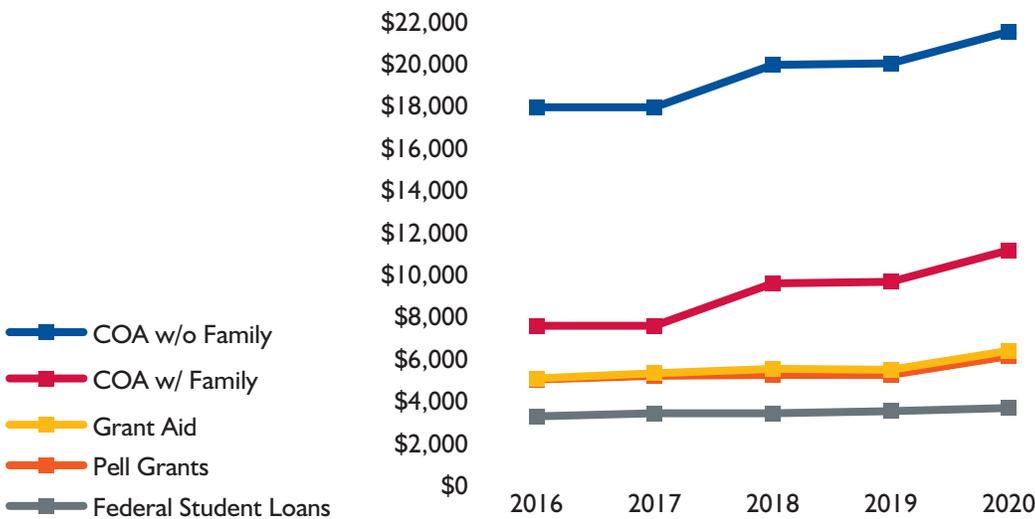


Note: Includes full-time first-time degree/certificate seeking students enrolled at the institution in the fall of the prior year.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE AI7.

Cost of Attendance (COA) and Student Financial Aid University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez

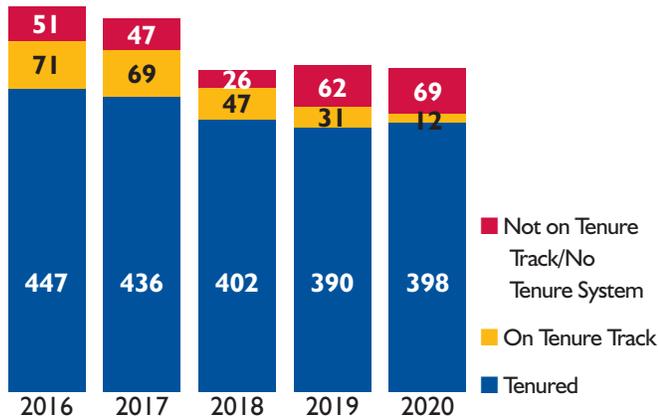


Note: Living arrangements are factored into the calculation of cost of attendance as follows: 1) living off campus with family, or, 2) living off campus without family.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A18.

Full-Time Faculty by Tenure Status
University of Puerto Rico–Mayagüez

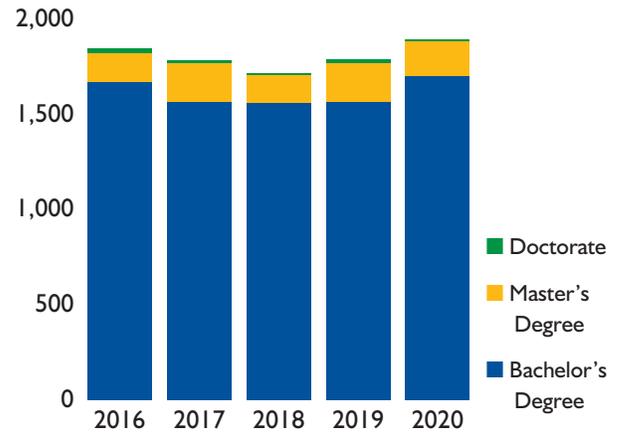


Note: IPEDS definitions of faculty rank are as follows. Tenure: status of a personnel position with respect to permanence of position. On Tenure Track: Personnel positions that lead to consideration for tenure. Not on Tenure Track: personnel positions that are considered non-tenure earning positions.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Staff and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A19.

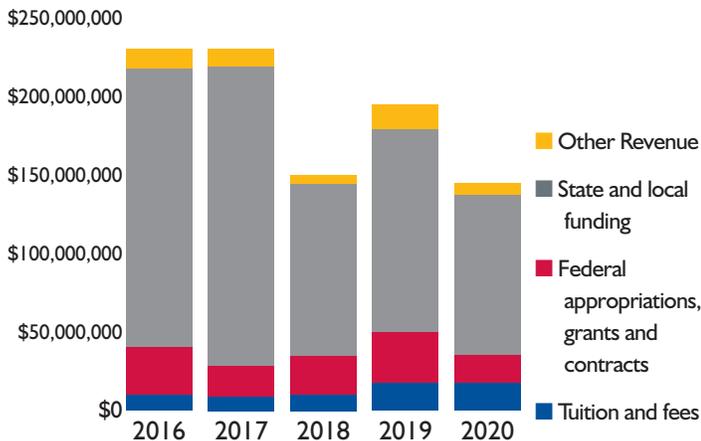
Degrees Awarded
University of Puerto Rico–Mayagüez



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A20.

Revenues by Source
University of Puerto Rico–Mayagüez

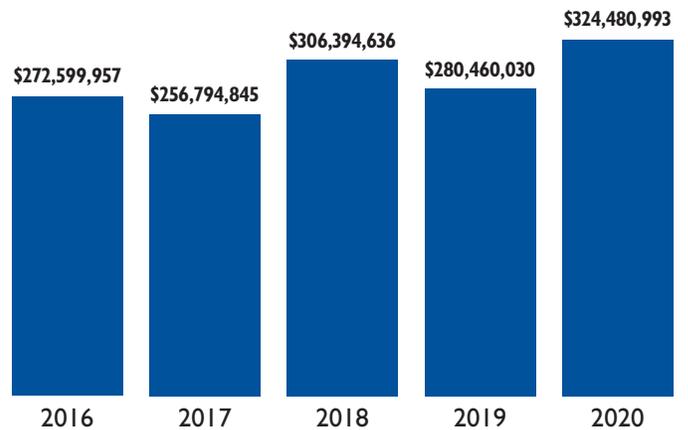


Note: Other includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts includes grants and contracts, contributions from affiliated entities.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A21.

Expenditures
University of Puerto Rico–Mayagüez

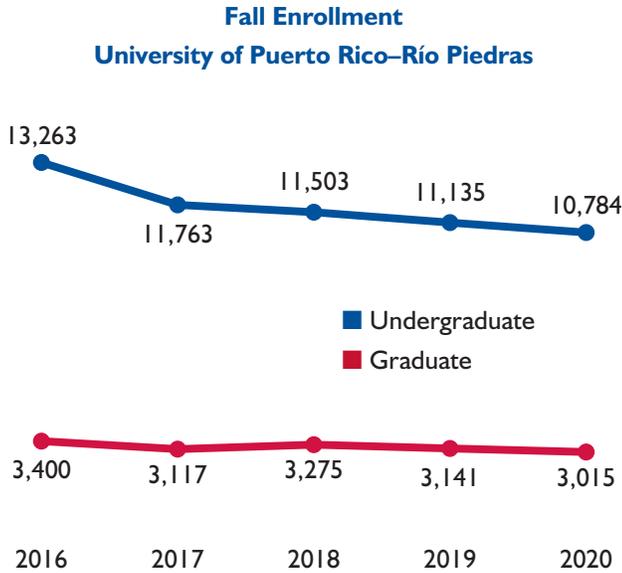


Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

APPENDIX: Institutional Data Profile Visualizations

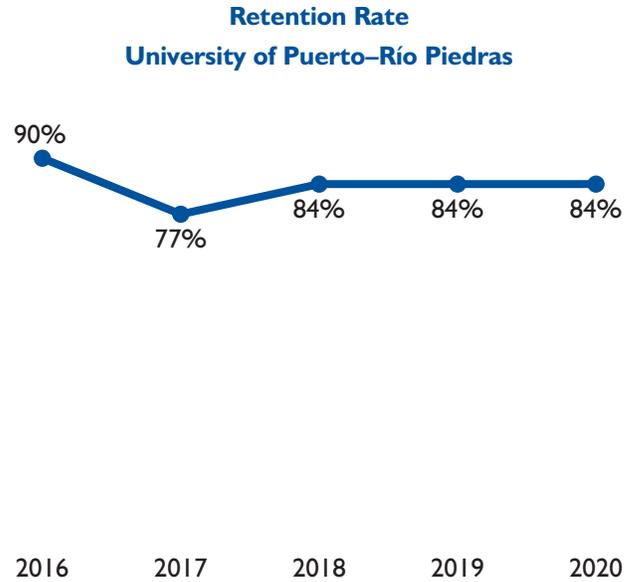
University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras

FIGURE A22.



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A23.

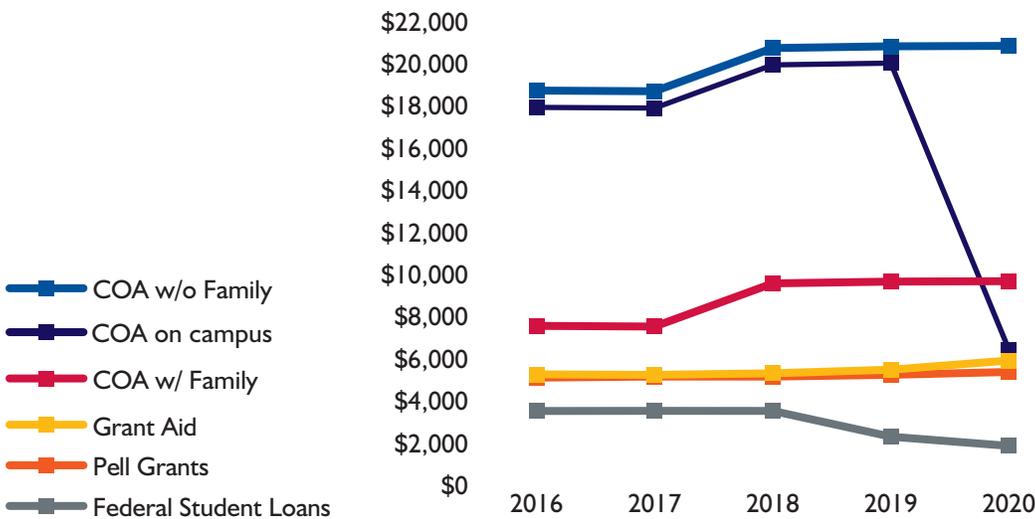


Note: Includes full-time first-time degree/certificate seeking students enrolled at the institution in the fall of the prior year.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A24.

Cost of Attendance (COA) and Student Financial Aid University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras

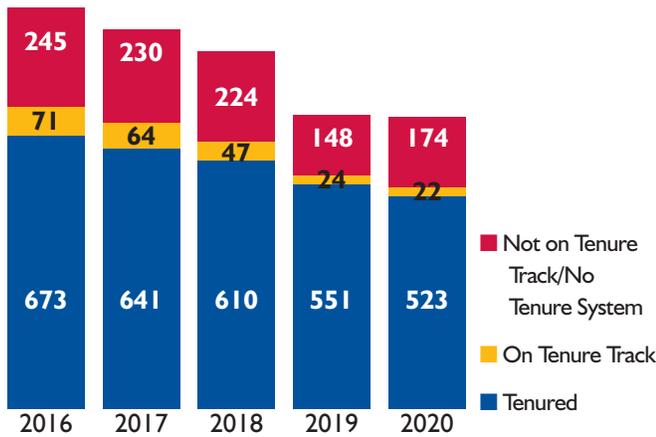


Note: UPR-Río Piedras has on-campus housing. Living arrangements are factored into the calculation of cost of attendance as follows: 1) living on campus, 2) living off campus with family, or, 3) living off campus without family.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A25.

Full-Time Faculty by Tenure Status
University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras

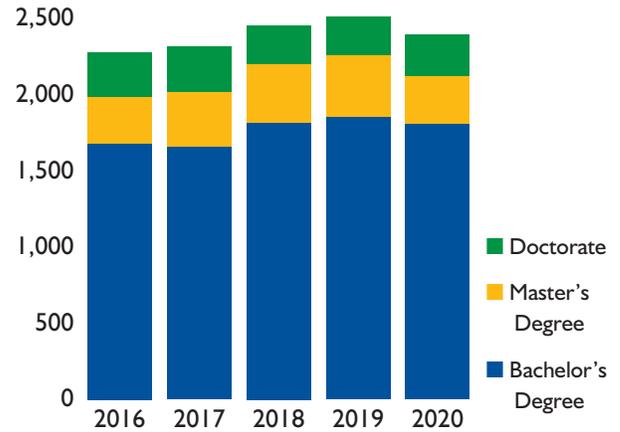


Note: IPEDS definitions of faculty rank are as follows. Tenure: status of a personnel position with respect to permanence of position. On Tenure Track: Personnel positions that lead to consideration for tenure. Not on Tenure Track: personnel positions that are considered non-tenure earning positions.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Staff and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A26.

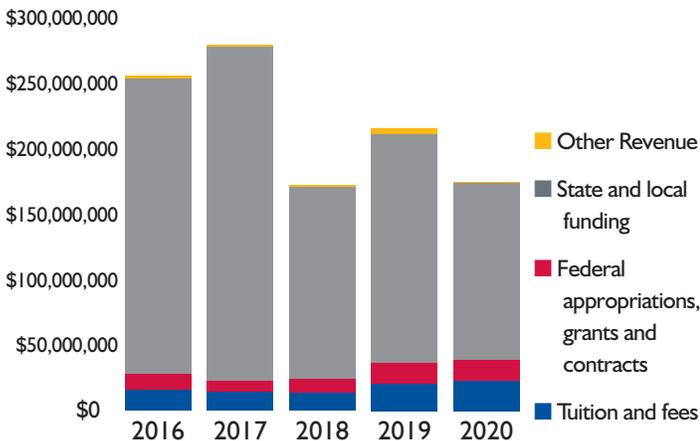
Degrees Awarded
University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A27.

Revenues by Source
University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras

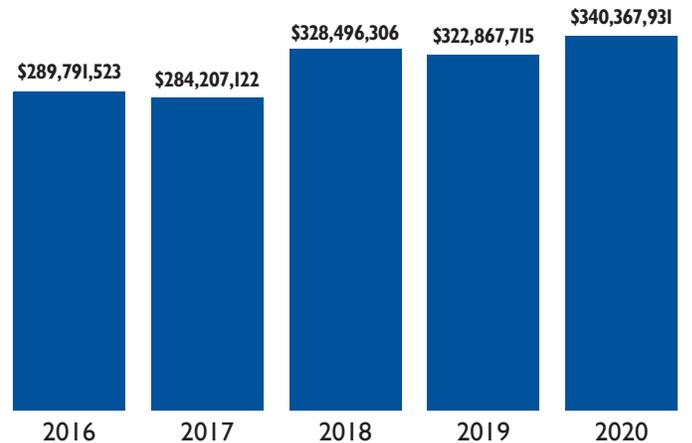


Note: Other includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts includes grants and contracts, contributions from affiliated entities.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A28.

Expenditures
University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras

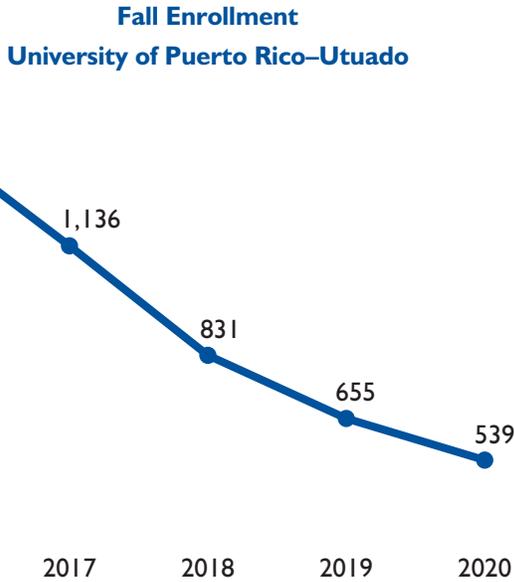


Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

APPENDIX: Institutional Data Profile Visualizations

University of Puerto Rico–Utuado

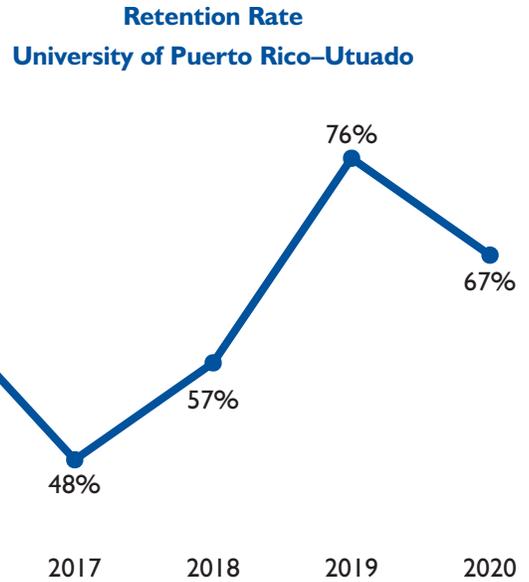
FIGURE A29.



Note: UPR-Utuado only enrolls undergraduate students.

Source: *Excelencia* in Education analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A30.

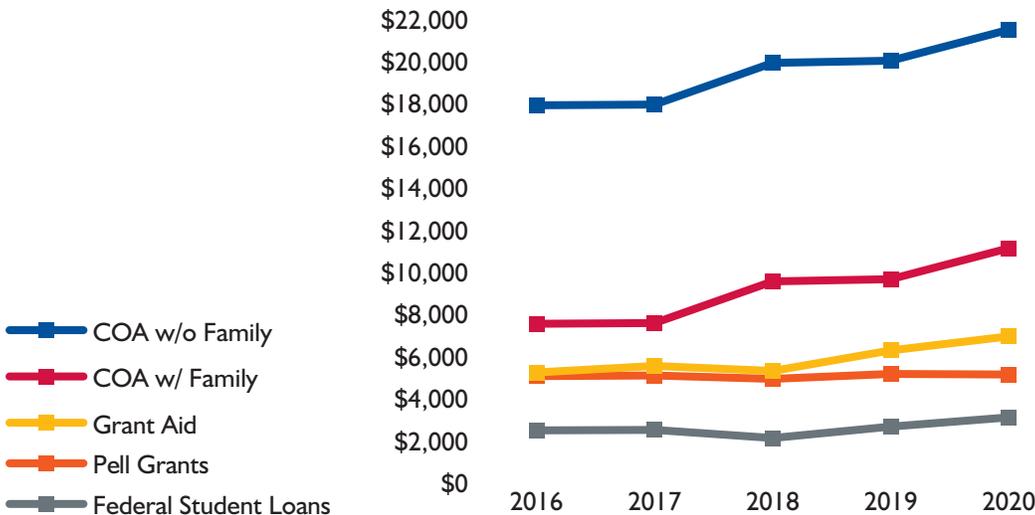


Note: Includes full-time first-time degree/certificate seeking students enrolled at the institution in the fall of the prior year.

Source: *Excelencia* in Education analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A31.

Cost of Attendance (COA) and Student Financial Aid University of Puerto Rico–Utuado

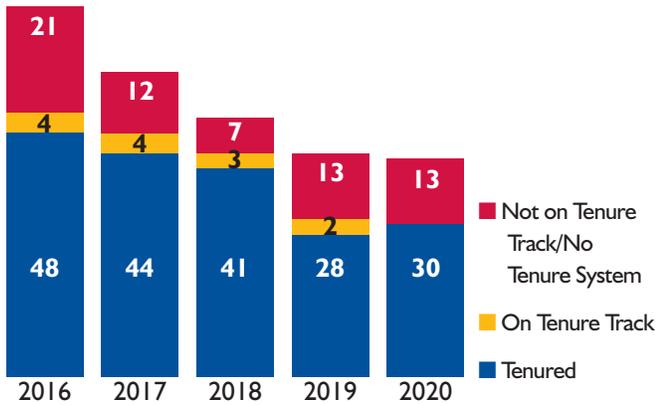


Note: Living arrangements are factored into the calculation of cost of attendance as follows: 1) living off campus with family, or, 2) living off campus without family.

Source: *Excelencia* in Education analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A32.

**Full-Time Faculty by Tenure Status
University of Puerto Rico–Utado**

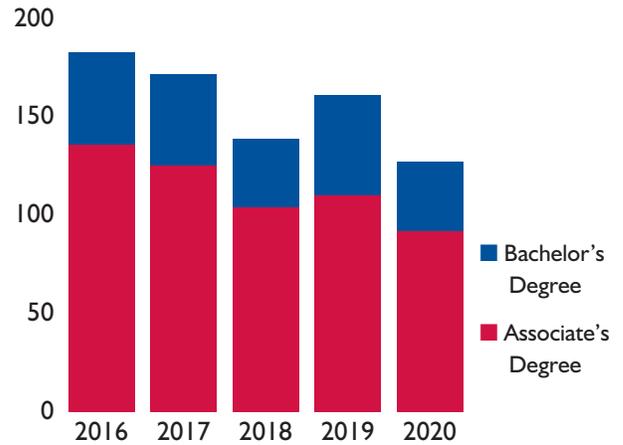


Note: IPEDS definitions of faculty rank are as follows. Tenure: status of a personnel position with respect to permanence of position. On Tenure Track: Personnel positions that lead to consideration for tenure. Not on Tenure Track: personnel positions that are considered non-tenure earning positions.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Staff and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A33.

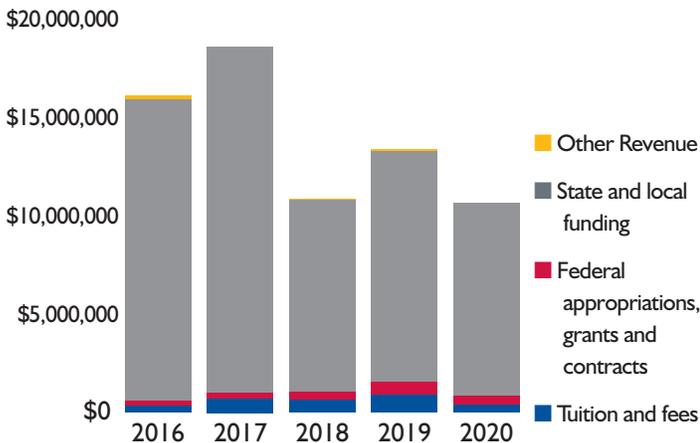
**Degrees Awarded
University of Puerto Rico–Utado**



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A34.

**Revenues by Source
University of Puerto Rico–Utado**

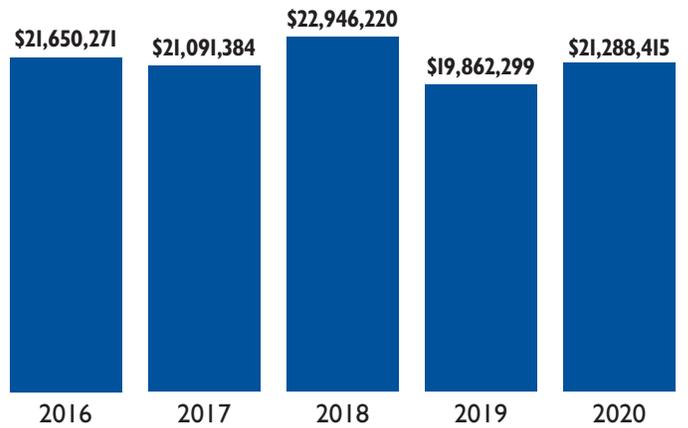


Note: Other includes sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of hospitals, independent operations and other, private gifts includes grants and contracts, contributions from affiliated entities.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

FIGURE A35.

**Expenditures
University of Puerto Rico–Utado**



Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Finance and Institutional Characteristics Surveys, 2016 through 2020.

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