



May 8, 1995

Dr. Howard L. Simmons
Executive Director
Commission on Higher Education
Middle States Association
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear doctor Simmons:

The University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (UPRM) completed its Comprehensive Self-Study process in September 1994. The results are presented in the Comprehensive Self-Study Report that was submitted to the Commission in February 1995. This report is an honest and candid summary of UPRM's strong and weak elements of performance and includes powerful recommendations that, if implemented, will surely help in the development of our institution.

We want to thank the Middle States Association for appointing such excellent professionals to the Evaluation Team that visited our campus on March 26 through 29. We sincerely appreciate the time these colleagues invested in reading and analyzing our Self-Study document, and we thank them for sharing their experience and ideas with our community. Dr. Carlos R. Hortas conducted the visit in a highly professional, objective, and collegial attitude.

The whole evaluation process, particularly the Oral Report to the Community on the final day of the visit, has generated an extraordinary interest in university members to learn more about accreditation and its consequences for offering excellent higher education.

We have read the Report of the Evaluation Team and we are in general agreement with its contents. In it we find a reaffirmation of our own findings, which shows that our Self-Study Report was indeed used as a basis for the analysis.

In particular, UPRM is commended for the excellence and variety of its academic offerings; the quality of instruction of its faculty members; its performance in reaching out to the community; its good management of fiscal resources; and for its beautiful environmental surroundings.


In regard to areas to be improved, we acknowledge the urgency of increasing retention and graduation rates at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, the critical need for strategic planning, and the value of establishing an outcomes assessment program.

As Chancellor, I have committed myself to eagerly pursue, practical solutions to those areas which are under UPRM's immediate control; and to influence higher officials of the system of the University of Puerto Rico to understand the necessity of granting a higher degree of autonomy and to increase fiscal resources so that we can address other areas of concern.

This whole process has been a challenging and rewarding experience and our only hope is that when the next accreditation process is scheduled, we will be enjoying the fruits of our labor.

Again, thank you for assisting our institution in continuing its search for excellence in higher education.

Cordially,


Stuart J. Ramos Biaggi
Chancellor