

Annual Report 2024-2025

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July 14, 2025

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I. General Information of the Dean's Office and Associated Units

a. Mission and Vision

1. Mission and Vision of the Dean's Office

Mission

The Department of English, which exists in an academic environment where English is a Second Language, addresses the needs of all students who enter the UPR-Mayagüez. It directs its efforts towards the development of educated, responsible, and cultured citizens and professionals in all areas with focus in fields related to English Studies, primarily those involved with the study of Linguistics, Literature, Writing and Communication, English Education, and English as a Second Language. Graduates of department programs will be qualified to contribute in an effective manner to the social, cultural, and economic development of Puerto Rico and the world at large.

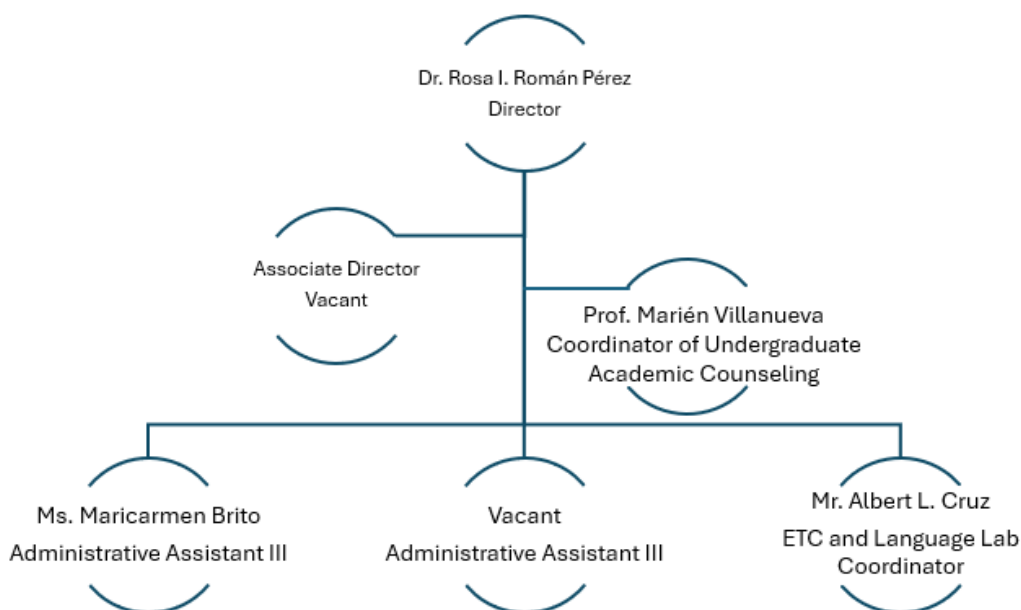
Vision

The Department of English focuses its efforts and initiatives equally in three fundamental areas: instruction, research and creative work, and service to the university community.

b. Organizational Structure

1. Organizational Chart of the Dean's Office

2. Organizational Chart of associated units under the Dean's Office



II. Report on Initiatives, Activities, and Achievements in Accordance with the Strategic Plan and International Activity

a. Executive Summary

The English Department has been working on the improvement of the quality of services for students, faculty, administrative personnel, and the university community through different initiatives such as collaborative work with other departments and faculties, pilot projects to develop proposals to secure funds that could be used to continue improving the services and infrastructure of the department, including the website. As for the academic side, the letter of intent for the bachelor's in film production was received. Professors from the Film Sector have been working on new courses and the curriculum for this new bachelor.

To improve the quality of student services, additional classrooms have been fitted for virtual education. Now there are six classrooms which are being monitored and updated for equipment that needs replacement. Two additional computers for film editing courses were added to CH 323G allowing for at least 10 students to work on their film projects.

There are several tasks still pending like the placement of bulletin boards in all classrooms to announce new courses and display QR codes for laws related to discrimination and sexual assault, among others. The lack of administrative support and personnel for cleaning and painting has delayed this project yet another year.

Related to infrastructure, the two computer labs condemned on December 2021, by the Health and Security Office condemned (CH 325 and 326) due to the detachment of clay bricks in the ceiling remain closed. The follow-up for this project is done by the Deanship of Arts and Sciences. The offices for Graduate Teaching Assistants (CH 008-013) have not been renovated yet and there is no communication of when it will begin. The modular desks donated by the College of Business Administration have been decommissioned due to the long wait.

The English Department office has been cleaned due to multiple instances of respiratory ailments. The Office of Health and Security indicated they provide the department with Air Purifiers to improve the air quality.

Incoming bachelor students (August 2024) were received at the welcome activity which included an information packet, snacks and several professors, student organization representatives and the dean who spoke to them and students participated actively. On May 23, 2025, an Honor Roll Activity with students, family, and faculty was held. Students received their certificates and shared with those present. Representatives from the MAEE and MAEL programs visited UPR at Aguadilla to promote both master's programs. Also, graduate students participated in the UPRM Graduate Programs Fair.

On September 5, 2024, Mr. Kevin Villanueva was hired as an Administrative Assistant III to work with student affairs and provide support to the Director. Unfortunately, he left in January, 2025 for a better paid position that included health insurance. Although the paperwork was submitted in February, 2025 to fill the position, it remains vacant. This position is crucial for tasks related to student affairs and support to the director. The lack of a year-long contract with minimum fringe benefits like health insurance for this probationary contract does not allow us to secure competitive and experienced administrative personnel.

Prof. Raisa Bonnet, a re-known film producer in Puerto Rico was successfully hired for the 2024-2025 academic year for the Film Production opening. Two additional positions were authorized for the department: 1. Linguistics and 2. Film Production and Animation. Job openings for both were announced, however, the openings were extended to September 30, 2025 due to very low applications. With these two openings the number of professors will be 20 again due to two retirements during this academic year (Dr. Billy Woodall in December, 2024 and Dr. Linda Rodríguez in June 2025).

Regarding research, nine professors have been awarded release time either through external grants or through the Office of Investigation at Arts and Sciences. They work or collaborate in Grants either as PI, Co-PI, Director, Senior Advisor, Co-leads, or consultants in interdisciplinary collaborations.

b. Objective 1: Institutionalize a culture of strategic planning and assessment

In its first meeting of January 2025, the English Department established the Department Committees to ensure that work could be planned, carried out, and reported at the last department meeting in May, 2025. Several committees have work-in-progress and some of them reported of their efforts towards recruitment, retention, and graduation. On May 6, all Sector committee chairs were informed they were appointed to work in the Department Strategic Committee and a representative and alternate should be elected for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Strategic Committee by August 2025 to ensure the English Department has an active roll in this committee.

A report on the Admissions Tendency was completed and submitted in June, 2025. It also included a preliminary Plan of Action to increase recruitment to the English Program (0907). Various committees collaborated with information and feedback. The plan will be shared with the faculty at the beginning of the semester to discuss the data collected related to the program and how assessment can be implemented and used for decision making, and continuous growth.

- c. Objective 2: To lead higher education throughout Puerto Rico while guaranteeing the best education for our students

The English Department has had a surge of reformation in the Writing and Communication minor with the intention of turning it into a bachelor's degree. The draft of the proposal includes the creation of new courses that respond to the recent demand for technical writing courses. A new course, Ethnography was submitted and approved at department and faculty level. Grant monies have been used to establish the foundation for the Curricular Sequence in Media Studies. As part of this effort, five new courses were created: (INGL 3018 *Media Aesthetics and Production*; INGL 3019 *Media, Power, and Representation*; INGL 3XXX *The Videographic Essay*; INGL 3XXX *Themes in Media Studies*, y INGL 3XXX *Adaptation*). Of these two have been approved. INGL 3018 *Media Aesthetics and Production* was taught in spring 2025 and INGL 3019 *Media, Power, and Representation* was scheduled for fall 2025. The other three are at the FAC Curricular Committee.

Another contribution for the future of not only the department, but of the University of Puerto Rico as well, is the creation of a robust Film Program which includes the expansion of our successful Film Certificate which had already launched various successful professionals in the film industry. The letter of intent was approved on April 22, 2025 by the VP at UPR. This is the precursor to additional initiatives that are already being discussed by the Film Sector. In addition, the Film Production initiative promotes innovation and foments interdepartmental collaborations (English, Hispanic Studies, Humanities, and Social Sciences) and the cooperation of all four academic colleges (Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering, and Agriculture) as well as opportunities with Fomento Económico, the Mayaguez Chamber of Commerce, the Puerto Rico Film Commission, and the Puerto Rico Film Festival of Puerto Rico. Throughout this academic year, various meetings have been held with the stakeholders and interested parties to collaborate with the film projects.

- d. Objective 3: To increase and diversify the Institution's sources of revenue

The English Department envisions opportunities to create sources of revenue through the new programs that will be created through its film programs and communication studies.

- e. Objective 4: To implement efficient and expedient competitive creative endeavors

The English Department has witnessed the creation of various short films by students from film courses, the Oral History Lab, and Cinematheque. Several have been presented in Puerto Rico, USA, and Internationally. Prof. Raisa Bonnet is currently

editing the coloring and sound of a feature film that will be screened next academic year. Three of our recent undergraduate students from Cinematheque are finishing their short film: *Luz quiere un bebé* which was an extraordinary collaboration between students from the English Department, Engineering, and Agriculture. Also, the English Department in collaboration with the URPM Library and the Oral History Lab have collaborated in various activities for the community where they are encouraged to write their stories and create short films and documentaries.

f. Objective 5: To strengthen research and competitive creative endeavors

The English Department in collaboration with the faculty of Arts and Sciences encouraged professors to apply for release time to do research, apply for external funding opportunities, and publish. Of the nine professors with release time, five participated in interdisciplinary grants. Tenured faculty has been sponsored by the Office of Investigation of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the investigators have been submitting proposals and reports of their accomplishments every semester and these include research (Collaboration with Hispanic Studies and Computer Engineering), creative endeavors (Film production); community engagement (Oral History Lab) and publications (Chapters, papers, etc.)

g. Objective 6: To impact our Puerto Rican society

The English Department through its production of short films, documentaries, podcasts, and the feature film, have impacted many communities throughout Puerto Rico. For example, the Oral History Lab had worked with a grant of 1.8 million dollars in various projects impacting various communities throughout Puerto Rico and in the Caribbean. From there, other additional awards were received to continue with the projects and work in communities. Also, when Prof. Raisa Bonnet entered the department, she came in with a budget of 1.7 million dollars for her feature film which impacted various communities in Puerto Rico in which she paid for their collaborations, time, and spaces. Our students from Cinematheque were allowed to film in various locations and highlighted aspects of our Puerto Rican heritage and experiences in their forthcoming short film.

We are positive that the bachelor's in film production will impact not only Western Puerto Rico but the Island in various aspects that include but are not limited to educational, financial, social, historical, and political endeavors while opening a venue for international exposure and our future development as an institution that promotes the arts.

Alumni from our Department work as: content creators, social media coordinators, educational consultants, professional editors, writers, screen writers, film producers and directors, legal interpreters, medical interpreters, researchers, language instructors,

tutors, English teachers, journalists, university professors, proposal writers, and public relations officer, and translators just to mention a few.

h. Objective 7: To strengthen school spirit, pride, and identity

The English Department is proud to work with nine active student organizations (undergraduate and graduate) which collaborate in events like: Orientation Week for Incoming Students, Open House for Schools, Camp ARC! Exploring your Vocation in the Art and Sciences, community service, collaborating department activities, and a variety of educational activities, showing and discussing films, self-care workshops, basic sewing, journaling, and game nights among many others. Several of our temporary and tenured faculty team up to provide leadership opportunities to the following organizations: The Bookwork Society, Cinémathèque, English Department Student Association, Her Campus, Pop Culture Student Association, Professional Graduate Honor Society, RUM English Graduate Association, RUM Linguists, and Sábanas Bilingual Literary Magazine. These organizations are of an interdisciplinary nature which strengthens student's educational experiences and foment healthy social interactions with other programs across our campus. We also have faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students who work with CUA that provide pre-college students with on-campus activities and experiences to prepare for college while they complete their high school studies, and these opportunities are sponsored by the CARSE grant.