

Measure 4: Ability of Completers to Be Hired in Education Positions for Which They Have Been Prepared

At the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez's Educator Preparation Provider (UPRM EPP), assessing the satisfaction of program completers is essential for continuously enhancing the quality of our teacher preparation programs. Feedback from UPRM EPP graduates provides valuable insights into their academic experience, helping identify areas for improvement and ensuring our program remains responsive to the evolving needs of educators. This input not only highlights the impact of our training on their professional development but also supports targeted enhancements that equip our graduates to navigate modern educational challenges and contribute meaningfully to student learning. To evaluate the hiring and preparedness of completers, we use a mixed-methods approach, incorporating various data sources to establish a comprehensive analysis of how educational experiences translate into professional outcomes. Through qualitative measures, a focus group of 14 completers—split between in-person and virtual sessions—shared their perspectives on how the UPRM EPP prepared them for their careers. Their feedback helps gauge the program's effectiveness in meeting educational benchmarks and ensures alignment with key standards, including those of the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC), the Puerto Rico Department of Education's Professional Standards for Teachers (PRDE-TPS), and the UPRM EPP Competencies.

To complement these qualitative insights, we also conducted surveys designed by UPRM EPP for both completers and their employers. These surveys, distributed via Microsoft Forms, provided valuable data on professional profiles and classroom performance. The survey design was refined to align with InTASC, PRDE, and Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards, undergoing review by the UPRM CAEP Steering Committee and subject matter experts. After revisions for clarity and alignment, a pilot test with current UPRM EPP students ensured the instrument's reliability. For qualitative data collection, we adapted the **Alumni Interview Protocol** by Flowers and Hancock (2004) to guide focus group discussions, ensuring consistency in responses and supporting a robust data triangulation process.

The completer survey was electronically distributed to graduates from the past three years (2021-2023). In Puerto Rico, individuals who pass the certification exams in early March become eligible for credentialing by the Puerto Rico Department of Education, allowing them to apply for teaching positions.

Key Findings:

1. Employment Rate of Completers

- 80% of completers have secured permanent teaching contracts.
- Certified completers work in various disciplines, including art, biology, general science, agriculture, physics, Spanish, history, English, mathematics, and physical education.
- Most completers are employed in the Mayagüez Educational Region, with 67% working in urban schools and 33% in rural schools.

- 55% work in public schools, while 44.4% are in private institutions.
 - 75% of completers teach at the secondary and specialized levels, while 25% work in elementary education.
- 2. Certification and Hiring Process**
- 83.3% of respondents are certified to teach by the Puerto Rico Department of Education.
 - 17% of completers are not yet certified, citing ongoing education or specific circumstances.
 - Completers who pass certification exams in March are eligible for teaching positions.
- 3. Continued Professional Growth**
- 63.6% of completers continue their studies while working, demonstrating a strong commitment to professional development.
- 4. Completers' Satisfaction with Teacher Preparation**
- Overall, completers reported satisfaction with their training at UPRM EPP, particularly praising:
 - Strong pedagogical preparation.
 - Effective teaching and learning strategies.
 - Integration of technology in instruction.
 - Special education methodologies.
 - Faculty support and mentorship.
 - Areas for improvement include:
 - Greater exposure to Puerto Rico Department of Education policies, particularly in special education.
 - Stronger emphasis on student discipline and case management for students with special needs.
 - Expanded training in advanced educational technologies, such as artificial intelligence, 3D modeling, online assessments, and the Puerto Rico Department of Education's **Educational Information System (SIE)**.
- 5. Instructional Strategies Applied by Completers**
- Graduates report utilizing modern, research-based instructional strategies, including:
 - **"Teach Like a Champion"** methodologies by Douglas Lemov.
 - Concept mapping, flipped classrooms, debates, cooperative learning, project-based learning, and formative assessments.
 - These strategies enhance student engagement, promote active learning, and support a dynamic, interactive classroom environment.

UPRM EPP remains committed to refining its teacher preparation programs based on completer feedback and data analysis. By continuously evolving to meet the demands of modern education, we ensure that our graduates are well-prepared, adaptable, and equipped to inspire the next generation of learners.